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LECTURES

ON VARIOUS TOPICKS

OF

MORALS, MANNERS,

CONDUCT,

AND

INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

ADDRESSED TO MRS. GARNETT'S PUPILS, AT ELM-WOOD, ESSEX COUNTY, VIRGINIA, 1825-6;

By JAMES M. GARNETT.

RICHMOND:

Printed and Published by Thomas W. White, Proprietor of the Copy-Right.

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1827.

EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA, *to wit*:

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BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twentieth day of December, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, THOMAS W. WHITE, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"*Lectures on Various Topicks of Morals, Manners, Conduct, and Intellectual Improvement; addressed to Mrs. Garnett's Pupils, at Elm-Wood, Essex County, Virginia,* 1825-6; *By* JAMES M. GARNETT."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."

RD. JEFFRIES.

Clerk of the Eastern District of Virginia.

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

Mr. Garnett having again presented me with some manuscript Lectures, addressed to his wife's pupils within the last ten or twelve months, I have been induced to offer them to the public in the present form, hoping to benefit others, at the same time that I endeavour to derive an honest profit from my undertaking. The first of his Lectures which I published, having been favourably received, I confidently trust that the following will prove not less acceptable to every one who feels an interest in the all important object of Female Education. For although these addresses do not form, like

the first, a connected series, each one of which was necessary to complete the entire design, yet they will be found to relate to most of the essential points in *Manners*, *Deportment*, *Moral Principles*, and *General Conduct*. The Author's scope, it is believed, will be sufficiently ample to satisfy most tastes; but in regard to the execution of his purpose, the Publisher submits it to better, and less interested judges, to decide. All he ventures to solicit, is, impartial examination.

THOMAS W. WHITE.

Richmond, Dec. 15th, 1826.

To Mrs. Garnett's Pupils.

Your old and unalterable friend James M. Garnett, having good reason to believe that the printed Lectures formerly inscribed to you, were, at least kindly received, if not beneficially used, by all to whom they were presented, has been thereby encouraged to repeat a similar experiment, with the same hope which prompted the first. This hope, accompanied by the anxious desire to render you some essential service, by inspiring your hearts and minds with the knowledge and love of virtue, imparts to the present undertaking, many pleasing an-

ticipations on your account, and God grant they may all be realized. For *should they be so,* you will all have made such good use of your various opportunities for improvement, that you will both merit, and enjoy every happiness which this life affords, and when you die, your souls will ascend to those ever blessed mansions of holy and departed spirits, eternal in the Heavens.

ELM-WOOD, ESSEX COUNTY, VA.
December 7th, 1826.

LECTURE I.

ON THE RECIPROCAL DUTIES OF TEACHERS AND SCHOLARS.

The topicks, young ladies, on which I shall address you to day, are the reciprocal duties of teachers and scholars; and although they are very general in their nature, yet they will admit of such a particular application to yourselves, that all may find something in them to suit her own case, provided she will subject herself to a strict self examination, as I proceed. To this kind of voluntary discipline, we must all continually submit, if we would derive the least practical benefit from any moral or religious admonitions that we either hear, or read.

That mortal has never yet been born, who at any period of life could truly say,—"I am too wise,—too well informed to learn more, than I already know, nor do I need any farther instruction in regard to any species of human knowledge." Long as many of us may live, it is the lot of humanity for us to remain poor, ignorant creatures at best; although to the latest hour of our lives the means of improvement, and of continual approximation towards perfection, are accessible to us all. This most consolatory truth should preclude despair at the apparent tardiness of our progress, and should inspire us with the never failing resolution "to persevere unto the end;" as the God of all mercy and goodness hath promised that we shall assuredly reap the heavenly fruit of our exertions, if we be not weary in well doing, and faint not by the way.

That you may bring this general truth home to the relative situations of yourselves, and your teachers, I will endeavour to point

out to you those mutual duties without the faithful performance of which, the knowledge of your deficiencies, either in morals, literature, or science, will be of little, or no use to you, or to them. In the first place then, it is the duty of your teachers, sedulously to protect from injury, as far as they can, both your moral and physical health; in other words, to supervise your conduct in regard both to body and soul. To enable them to do this with any good effect, they must necessarily be invested,—temporarily at least, with all the rights of parents; and accordingly, they *have been thus invested*, by those who placed you under their care. If then, you owe your parents and temporal guardians deference, and obedience, you owe it also, to your instructers, provided your own understandings convince you, that the object of their whole conduct towards you, is, *your own good;* and such, I trust you must feel it to be. If you believe that your fathers, mothers, and legal protectors know better than you can, in consequence of their

longer experience, what will best promote this good, you are bound by every principle of morality and religion, to believe that your teachers also, possess this superior knowledge, because your parents have chosen them as *their* representatives. You cannot otherwise listen with any benefit to their instructions, nor regard, as you ought to do, their admonitions. From this general transfer of parental authority, all the particular duties and rights of your teachers are derived. If it be the parent's duty,—as it most unquestionably is, (for God himself enjoins it,) to point out to you every error of conduct; and to restrain you from every improper practice, the same duty, undoubtedly devolves upon your teachers; and the same obligation to obey the last as the first, devolves upon you. Without a thorough understanding of these reciprocal duties, and a fixed determination to regard the obligation to fulfil them, as sacred and inviolable, the business of instruction becomes not only exceedingly irksome, but useless,

or nearly so, to both parties. The instructers perform *their* part, either with indifference, or decided repugnance; and the instructed,—or rather those who *ought to be so*, turn a deaf ear to every thing that is said, or meet all effort to improve them, with dogged opposition. But, with proper views and feelings of the relative situations in which they are placed, the connexion and intercourse between teacher and scholar may become one of great mutual advantage and endearment. Let the pupil only manifest respect, deference, and attachment towards her instructer, and she certainly secures regard and affection for herself. You have no imaginable right to expect that these sentiments can be entertained for you, if you give way to ill humour, whenever you feel it; if you indulge yourselves, when out of temper, in uttering rude complaints, in making vexatious and angry speeches, either *to*, or *about* those with whom you live; or in showing that you have neither humility enough to see and acknowledge your faults, nor sufficient

self control to restrain and conquer them. Take my word for it, my young friends, that neither regard, affection, nor any other good feeling towards you, can ever be, either inspired or preserved by habits and qualities so entirely repulsive. It will be to little purpose, that shame, repentance, and confession of error, shall follow every offence, as they certainly will, in all who are not hardened in misconduct, if repetitions of the same, or similar misdeeds, soon succeed each other. For you should always keep it in mind, that teachers are subject to the same infirmities, frailties, and faults of temper to which their scholars are liable; and if they appear more exempt, it is only because they have practised towards themselves a longer and more rigorous discipline. But this liability, although they may have emancipated themselves, in a great measure, from its dominion, still renders it impossible for them to feel attachment for those, who manifest none for them; or to regard with affection, pupils who never listen to their ad-

monitions but with ill humour; who disobey their most positive commands; who are utterly regardless of all the common forms of polite and friendly intercourse; and who yield, upon every temptation or provocation, to all sorts of whims, caprices, perverseness, and ill temper. Their teachers will still, from a sense of duty, endeavour to instruct them; but as the task will be nearly without hope, it will not be in human nature to perform it with all that anxious tenderness of parental regard, and earnest energy, which alone can insure complete success, where the dispositions of the pupils are, what they should be. The connexion will be viewed by both parties, as one of dire necessity; and all the various benefits which might have resulted from it, will be, in a great degree, counteracted and lost. How immeasurably preferable will be the intercourse between those pupils and teachers, where the sedulous effort to instruct, is met by a corresponding desire to be instructed; where prompt and cheerful compliance fol-

lows reasonable and necessary requests; where affectionate acts and filial deeds, rather than fair promises never fulfilled, and flattering speeches, respond to parental persuasions to pursue the paths of wisdom and virtue, instead of dashing headlong into those of idleness, frivolity, selfishness, and mental abasement. The first constitutes one of the highest pleasures in the scale of all rational enjoyment, while the last, is a misery, almost past endurance, by those who are truly and disinterestedly anxious for the welfare of their scholars. But even to such persons as have no immediate concern in the business of instruction, there can be few spectacles so painful, as to see the mind of a young person,—especially, if that person be a female, running to waste, and threatening an utter destitution of all good feelings, good principles, and liberal acquirements. It is enough to pain the heart of an indifferent spectator. With what unutterable anguish then, must it wring the bosoms of friends, relatives, and parents!

It is our very sincere wish to render your time, while members of our family, not only as improving as salutary to your minds, morals, and manners; but also as agreeable to yourselves, as it can be made, consistently with these most important and paramount objects of pursuit. But all this will depend most materially, on yourselves. The knowledge of your duties, for which you must look to *us*, will be utterly unavailing, without the continual practice of them, for which we shall have to rely upon you. The spirit must not only be willing; but the flesh also, must have its natural weakness so far subdued, as not to counteract this willingness. The powers of self control, and the fixed purpose of doing as you would be done by, must be constantly exercised, even in the smallest family of which you may become members. For if there be any truth or propriety in the well known adage, that "man is a little world,"—containing within himself something of all the varieties of dispositions, propensities and passions which

are to be found among his species at large, then may the comparison be applied with much more fitness to a number of individuals—large as you find here, dwelling together, and almost necessarily in habits of continual intercourse. And if these traits of character in each individual, may, by mismanagement, mar our own happiness, much more may it be destroyed by similar defects in the characters of others. There is in fact, a mutual dependence of incalculable extent, among social beings,—such as God has made us, which renders mutual efforts to serve and to please each other, as essential to almost all rational enjoyment, as food is to the support of life. You must not then, imagine, that because you happen to be going to school, you are therefore exempt from acting as well as you can, towards every individual with whom you live. For if there was no moral nor religious obligation on you to do so, selfishness—base selfishness alone, would dictate this necessity, simply, because by no other imaginable means, can

we induce others to act well towards ourselves. The due consideration of this universal law of our nature, should teach you, whenever you are disposed to be out of humour, or angry with any other person, to examine yourselves thoroughly before you give way to any expression of these culpable feelings; since this examination would very probably end in discovering that you alone were to blame in the first instance. Ill conduct in ourselves will almost always provoke some kind of retaliation in others. Hence the necessity of looking first at home for causes of censure and self abasement, before we cast our eyes abroad to find them in our companions; for such is the folly and blindness of the sentiment of revenge, that it always pays more than is due, even on the principle of its being justifiable. This creates a new debt of animosity, which being retributed in the same way, that is by some excess in retaliating, the infuriate and demoniacal struggle of who can inflict the deepest wound,—which originated perhaps, in the merest trifle imag-

inable, becomes a quarrel for life, and not unfrequently descends to their children. All the idle, petty,—and pardon me, if I call them silly bickerings, disputes, and affronts which, I fear, sometimes take place, even in *your* society may terminate in results equally deplorable, unless, when they unfortunately arise, each individual concerned, does not make all the haste she can, to extend towards her offended companions, the hand, or the embrace of reconciliation. While any of those passions which lead to bitter altercations, and angry contention, are kept rankling in the heart, all good feelings are as entirely excluded for the time, as if we were savage beasts of prey, instead of rational animals: nor can either soul or body be long sustained upon such food.

If you have any desire then, for your own improvement; if you have any wish for fair reputation; any anxiety to be loved and esteemed;—in a word, if you have any solicitude about your own happiness, let me

most earnestly beseech you to cast away the thoughtlessness and irrationality of wild, ungovernable, perverse children, and begin without delay, to form the characters which are to accompany you through life, and to extend their influence, even beyond the grave. Would you insure all the benefits of instruction, prove yourselves at all times, desirous to obtain them, and ready to pursue with cheerfulness and assiduity, the means which may be pointed out by those to whom the business of teaching you has been confided. If you believe that these persons know more, than you do, of what they profess to teach, then to undertake to judge and choose for yourselves, *what* and *how* you will be taught, is both folly and disobedience. But should they know less, you should go elsewhere, or cease to go to school altogether. Would you pass your time agreeably among your companions; have you any desire that they should extend towards you friendship and affection, you must first manifest an inclination to extend

these sentiments towards them: for it is as much impossible that they should exist between individuals, without reciprocal efforts to produce them, as for happiness to flow from a course of conduct, pre-eminently vicious and profligate. It will avail nothing that the golden rule of "doing as you would be done by," be always at your tongue's end, unless it be also in your heart's core, giving continual vigour to all your good motives, and a beneficent operation to all your actions. For failing to adopt this admirable rule, you can have no possible excuse; since it is one, the excellence of which consists in its perfect adaptation to minds of all orders and degrees,—independent entirely, of what is called genius, or exalted talent; and to situations of every nature and kind whatever. All, for example, may be kind and obliging; all may be cheerful and good-humoured; and there are none who may not manifest, on every occasion, benevolent and friendly dispositions. These qualities are alone sufficient to create for us a never failing pass-

port to every heart:—for having myself been a member of several of those little communities—called schools, I never knew a boy who possessed them, (and it cannot be different with girls,) that was not a universal favourite. His approach was ever hailed with kindly salutations, as the harbinger of some innocent amusement, or joyous mirth; and his presence alone, seemed to inspire all, with the mutual wish to please. Such is the power,—the resistless force,—the electric charm of a good, cheerful temper, combined with the angelic sentiment of universal benevolence. Can there be any possible comparison between such a state of society among those who must necessarily associate together for many months,—if not years, and one where wrangling, contention, and strife imbitter almost every hour, and produce entire alienation of regard, where all might, so easily, be peace, contentment, and social happiness? Will it be possible, my young friends, for any of you who seriously reflect upon this undeniable truth, to dis-

regard and violate any of those little observances which constitute good behaviour to each other, when it is so manifest that they will be repaid, more than a hundred fold, by the returns that you will rarely fail to receive for them? These will almost always be kindness and esteem; and not unfrequently, friendship and the warmest affection. When the body is sick with disease, or what is infinitely worse,—the heart sick with sorrow, you will be surrounded by sympathising friends, ministering with anxious solicitude, to all your wants,—offering every comfort and consolation which such sentiments can inspire, or call into action. How different,—how widely different will be *her* situation who has lived so regardless of the feelings of others, as never to have made any effort to conciliate their esteem, or secure their affection; who almost always petulant, discontented, peevish, and fretful, returns angry scowls for jocular remarks; vexatious replies to harmless questions; and repays whatever she may consider ill-treatment of

herself, with compound interest. Should it be *her* misfortune to become the victim of any malady, either bodily or mental, the only attentions for which she can hope, or can receive, are those which humanity alone will pay. Even, should the heaviest calamity of our mortal nature befal her, both the alleviation, and the cure, (if any,) must be sought in her own mind; for none will be at hand to help her, unless perchance, some one of the very few, whose christian benevolence is strong enough to overcome the natural repugnance which all feel to approach, or to have any communication with such characters. The misery of their condition is greatly aggravated by the fact, that the more they need the aid of others, the less power have they to obtain it; for their repulsive manners and conduct having kept all at a distance in their days of comparative prosperity, when the dark, and distressful hour of adversity comes, none will be near to aid, for few can be disposed to pity or relieve. These two descriptions

of persons, afford a very striking exemplification of the Scripture paradox, as it appears to some; "unto every one that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance; *but from him that hath not*, shall be taken away, even that which he hath." For in regard to the first, none have so little experience, as not to have remarked, that the better they are known, the more friends they have; while the second, continually lose, by every act of their lives, some portion of any small pittance of regard which consanguinity, or some other accidental circumstance may have procured for them.

Among all the various modes in which our besetting sin of selfishness displays itself, very few are more to be deprecated, than the foregoing; but there is another which it may be useful to notice here, because this last evinces a similar disregard to the *interests* of others, which the first does to their feelings. Although among my present auditors, I should hope to find no exam-

ples of this species of selfishness, yet it is so common, and is such a striking evidence of a grovelling, vulgar, and ill-regulated mind, that some caution against it, must not be altogether omitted. In the motly multitude of those whose subsistence is provided for by other people, there are to be found, not a few, who act as if they believed, that the payment of a pecuniary compensation for what is usually called *board*, actually purchases the right to use, abuse, and even utterly to destroy, without regard to kind or value, every species of property belonging to the persons who are thus compensated. The usual exclamation of "don't we pay our money for every thing; and we will take what we please, and do as we please," by which such outrages against good manners, and in fact, against justice itself, are attempted to be sanctioned, would be deemed exceedingly vulgar and scandalous in any *man* having the least pretensions to the character of a gentleman. What then, ought to be thought of them, in those of the other sex,

who from their situations and connexions in life, ought to shun every thing in the slightest degree derogatory to the character of a lady, as they would shun a pestilential disease. But a little reflection would convince such lawless offenders, that they are as ignorant of the nature of such contracts, and of the real value and power of money, as of true propriety and fitness of conduct. It would thoroughly satisfy them that there are many things which all the money ever coined, cannot possibly purchase; and not a few rights and privileges that are altogether unattainable by any amount of wealth which man ever possessed. For example, not all the riches upon earth, can purchase the right to take, misuse, or destroy the property of another without his or her knowledge, or consent; because the all just ruler of the universe having decreed that we should neither, privately, nor forcibly take that which does not belong to us, no human being can either sell, or bestow any such right. Again, no sum that possibly can be imagined, can

purchase as much, either of wit, wisdom, or knowledge, as would cover—could it be measured, the point of a cambrick needle; not all the wealth of the world, can procure for us, either respect, esteem, or affection; and all the planets of the solar system, could they be converted into gold coin, would be quite insufficient to cure either mental or bodily anguish, or to buy for us, one solitary grain of real virtue or happiness. Money, it is true, can obtain us food and raiment in surfeiting and overwhelming abundance; it can also buy sensual gratifications of every description; it can even purchase flattery and subserviency by the yard, pound, or ton; but beyond this, it is as valueless and impotent, as the dross left after its coinage, or the vile dust of the mine from which its ore is dug. Beware then, my young friends, for heaven sake beware, that none of you suffer your minds to be poisoned with the insane pride and vanity of wealth; nor imagine even for one moment, that because there is every probability of your being rich in mo-

ney, you are therefore privileged to be poor in spirit, presumptuous in conduct, supercilious and overbearing in manner, or deficient in sense, politeness, and justice. The greater your prospective wealth, the more numerous and weighty are the obligations on you to learn to apply it to laudable uses; instead of lavishing it away in idleness, extravagance, and vicious indulgences. The more you expect to be worth in property, the greater should be your worth in mental riches; for worldly wealth is always viewed with suspicion, jealousy, and envy, unless the possessor can propitiate favour, and conciliate esteem, by continually displaying such qualities and dispositions both of heart and mind, as command respect, and insure affection.

Having said as much as the present occasion will admit on your duties to your teachers and your companions, the still more important duties which you owe particularly to yourselves, remain to be noticed. These,

if faithfully discharged, will insure the complete fulfilment of all the rest. And here the first thing to be done, is to form correct and virtuous habits; for without these, nothing which man or woman either, can possibly attain, of what is called useful knowledge, or mere accomplishments, can contribute much towards that universal, but vaguely defined object of human pursuit—happiness. With these habits you should associate, as their inseparable companions, mental adornment and intellectual riches. For it has been most justly remarked, "that he who has no resources of mind, is more to be pitied, than he who is in want of necessaries for the body; and to be obliged to beg our daily happiness from others, bespeaks a more lamentable poverty, than that of him who begs his daily bread."

As a matter of duty I feel myself bound to press, most earnestly, upon your attention, even the most minute of the foregoing precepts and admonitions. As an affair of in-

clination, and from a sincere desire for your welfare, I beseech you to regard them, as of paramount importance both to your present and future life. It is here,—as members of our family, that your dearest friends and relatives expect you to imbibe the principles,—to gain the knowledge, and to form the habits which are to sustain you through whatever perils, trials, and calamities you may be doomed to suffer; and to secure for you such a portion of earthly happiness, as you may reasonably calculate on enjoying,—if you will only regulate your minds and passions as you ought. But this depends infinitely more upon yourselves, than on us. We can point out the road which you are to travel;—we can lead you towards the pure and eternal fountains of truth, wisdom, and knowledge; and can even furnish you with some useful directions how to proceed. But this is all we can do; *your own feet*, not *ours*, must take the necessary steps for your own progress;—your own volition alone, can cause you to drink of these ever-living—

exhaustless waters; your own eyes and understandings must take in the intellectual food which is to support you through the vale of life; and your own judgment must prepare, digest, and assimilate it for sustenance and nutrition. Your failure to do this,—whatever may be the present temptations to such highly culpable conduct, can end,—after it is too late to repair your error, in nothing but bitter regrets and mortification on your part;—in the most painful disappointments and sorrow to your parents and friends; and in the final ruin of all your own fairest hopes and prospects. If I could find in my heart to wish you any ill, I know not one among the whole that the fabulous box of Pandora was said to contain, which I would sooner select for ultimately rendering you miserable, than a fixed habit of idleness, accompanied by an unconquerable repugnance to every thing like useful and improving study. It matters not a straw, how exempt the girl may be from other faults and vices, if these take fast hold of her, nothing

but the mercy of God can save her from moral degradation and destruction.

On this all important subject, there is so excellent a passage in a late inaugural discourse of the celebrated Mr. Brougham, upon being installed Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, that I have persuaded myself it will give you both pleasure and instruction; for although it was addressed to boys and young men, it is equally applicable to you in all its principal bearings. After some introductory remarks he proceeds to say;—"It is not the less true, because it has been oftentimes said, that the period of youth is by far the best fitted for the improvement of the mind, and the retirement of a college, almost exclusively adapted to much study. At your enviable age, every thing has the lively interest of novelty and freshness; attention is perpetually sharpened by curiosity, and the memory is tenacious of the deep impressions it then receives, to a degree unknown in after life;

while the distracting cares of the world, or its beguiling pleasures cross not the threshhold of these calm retreats; its distant noise and bustle are faintly heard, making the shelter you enjoy more grateful; and the struggles of anxious mortals embarked on that troublous sea, are viewed from an eminence, the security of which is rendered more sweet, by the prospect of the scene below. Yet a little while, and you too will be plunged into those waters of bitterness! and will cast an eye of regret upon the peaceful regions you have quitted forever. Such is your lot as members of society. But it will be your own fault, if you look back on this place with repentance, and with shame; and be well assured that whatever time,—aye, every hour you squander here in unprofitable idling, will then rise up against you, and be paid for by years of bitter, but unavailing regrets. Study then, I beseech you, so to store your minds with the exquisite learning of former ages, that you may always possess within yourselves, sources of rational and

refined enjoyment, which will enable you to set at naught the grosser pleasures of sense, whereof other persons are slaves; and to imbue yourselves with the sound philosophy of later days, forming yourselves to the virtuous habits which are its legitimate offspring, that you may walk unhurt through the trials which await you, and may look down upon the ignorance and error which surround you, not with lofty and supercilious contempt, but with the vehement desire of enlightening those who wander in darkness, and who are by so much the more endeared to us, by how much they want our assistance."

Such has recently been the language of this truly great man to the students of the University of Glasgow. It is the language of wisdom and of virtue flowing directly from the heart of one, anxiously and ardently solicitous for the good of the rising generation; and is equally well adapted to the youth of either sex, who may be engaged in the pursuit of useful knowledge. It is true that

there is some difference between the species of mental acquirement best adapted to your sex and ours; but as regards the general purpose, the motive and the means of the acquisition, we are all under the same sacred obligation to give our whole heart and soul to their attainment. We all stand in the same awful relation to our God and Father; we all owe to Him, under the most appalling of all responsibilities, the improvement of every talent committed to us, to the highest degree of which it is susceptible; and we are bound therefore by every tie, which can influence rational and immortal souls, not to intermit, for a moment, the exertions necessary to accomplish the great end for which these souls were bestowed on us. Consider the quotation then, I most solemnly entreat you, as addressed to yourselves, on the most deeply interesting of all earthly concerns—mental improvement; and take it home to your own business and bosoms, as containing the principles of your whole course through life. This is the period, and at

school is the place for acquiring and confirming these principles. This is the period, and this the place for meriting and contracting those friendships which are to prove your sweetest solace during the meridian and downhill of life;—mutual aid in your studies; mutual efforts to please in your hours of recreation; and a kind, affectionate manner towards each other throughout your whole intercourse, are the means by which these endearing connexions are to be formed and cemented. All that you have to do here, if it be done with the proper motives and feelings, is eminently well calculated to promote this most desirable object. None of the base, selfish, malignant, and grovelling passions of the heart have here any exciting causes to call them forth, or to palliate their indulgence; and every employment recommended to your pursuit *must* result, if properly followed, in your own happiness. The prize held forth to you in *this* world, is at once the noblest and most precious of all others;—it is nothing less, than the volun-

tary homage of every virtuous heart; the love and affection of the good and the wise in every rank of life; while the rewards for which you may rationally hope in the world to come, are pleasures unalloyed with the least mixture of pain, and joy and felicity, as immortal, as the all beneficent and everlasting God by whom they will be bestowed.

I cannot suffer the present occasion to pass without calling your attention to the awful fact, that the lapse of a very few days will close forever, another year of that brief, and fearfully uncertain period of our mortal existence; and God only can tell, how much, —if any of the next approaching twelve months we shall be permitted to see. Let me solemnly put it to your consciences to say, whether you are sufficiently aware, that every thing which you have thought, said, or done amiss, during the whole of the past period, has been carefully registered in the eternal and unchangeable records of the

Most High;—there to bear witness against you on that great and terrific day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be known, and when, according to the deeds done in the flesh, we shall all be rendered happy or miserable to endless ages. Would to God that I could impress this most momentous circumstance so deeply on your minds, as to induce you all, immediately to enter into a strict and thorough self-examination in regard to your whole conduct for the past year. Would to God, that I had power to persuade you, so to use this retrospection, as anxiously to avoid, in the approaching year, (should your lives be spared,) every error or vicious act which you may have committed during the past; and to seek, with increased ardour by all attainable means, to act that exemplary part which knowledge and virtue alone, continually aided by the Divine Spirit, can enable you to act.

All of you are candidates for happiness in *this* world, and there are none, I trust,

but have, at least some vague hopes, of enjoying it in the *next;* but that misery must be your inevitable doom, unless you pursue the means necessary to secure this happiness, is, as absolutely certain, as the existence of the Omnipotent God, who has made to us this revelation of his will. With you it remains to decide, whether you will seek to be associated with those who desperately brave all the appalling penalties denounced against the indulgence of vicious appetites and passions; or with such as continually strive, in spirit and in truth, to do the will of their Father and God. Heaven and hell are both, constantly before you, but the delay of a single day,—aye, of a single hour, may forever exclude you from the one, or prevent the possibility of your escaping the other. Choose, I most earnestly implore you, choose speedily, the course which your Creator and Redeemer has pointed out and commanded, and which all who have any claims to your obedience,—all who feel any interest in your happiness,—all whom you

yourselves most love and esteem, are most anxiously desirous that you should choose, or the opportunity may be lost to all eternity.

LECTURE II.

ON THE LOVE OF DISTINCTION AND THE VARIOUS MEANS OF ATTAINING IT.

The love of distinction, and the means of attaining it, are the subjects which I have selected for the present Lecture; and I feel particularly anxious that they should engage your serious attention; because few, if any of you, seem sufficiently aware to what vast extent they influence almost all the actions of mankind. With great truth it may be said, that so far, at least, as this world is concerned, the entire merit or demerit of our characters depends upon the direction which this passion for distinction

may take. Direct it badly, and the world is filled with every species of folly, vice, and crime; point it to proper objects, and we behold all that is great or good, admirable or praiseworthy in the exertions of human intellect and power. You will readily perceive then, how highly important it is, to inquire to what objects it *ought to be turned;* how it may best be regulated; and what means may justifiably be used for its gratification. That all persons, whether male, or female, are in some degree actuated by this passion, must be obvious to the most careless observer. None then, can be unconcerned in examining into the various modes in which it operates, and endeavouring to guard themselves against such as have a manifest tendency to degrade and vilify us in public estimation; unless it be the desperate few who are so entirely absorbed in self, as to pursue their own wayward fancies in every thing, regardless alike, of all that can either be thought or said of them. As this love of distinction is among the earliest of all those

sentiments which influence our general conduct, nothing is more worthy of our care, nothing more essential to our happiness, than to watch most assiduously, its first impulses, and to suppress,—the moment we become capable of serious reflection, every inclination to seek its gratification, by such habits, manners, or conversation, as are really derogatory to the character of rational and moral beings. Strange as it may seem, that such a passion should ever operate to render us, either ridiculous, disagreeable, or odious, the fact is unquestionable; and it will serve to account for a very large portion of the eccentricities, follies, and vices which we every day behold in many of our fellow-creatures. The primary object, and the immediate gratification being to attract notice, each individual resorts to those means of procuring it, which first present themselves to the imagination; and these will always be good or bad, according as the previous education of the aspirant has been carefully attended to, or greatly neglected. The

methods deemed the cheapest,—in other words, those which require least thought and labour, will be most generally adopted; and the qualities which are really sought to be acquired, or the appearance of which is only assumed for purposes of deception, will be such as appear most popular in the company of the gay, the idle, and the dissipated. Show,—not utility, will attract most admirers among the mixed multitude of which every community is composed; and unless strong natural good sense, or good moral discipline protect us, we often commit the most egregious blunders in selecting the parts which we are to play in the great drama of life. It seems never once to occur to many of us, that it is infinitely easier to nurture and elevate our own natural character to its highest state of susceptible improvement, than to assume and to succeed in that of another; and consequently, that it is best for each individual always to maintain his or her own proper, natural dispositions and qualities,—cultivated certainly, as highly as

possible, but still so far the same, as to incur no risk of being detected in borrowed habiliments. The fate of the daw in peacock's feathers, and of the ass in the lion's skin, should be a warning to all those who take a fancy to play parts for which nature never designed them, not to venture upon so hazardous an experiment.

Let us endeavour to examine some of the instances of misapplied talent and labour in this eager, indiscriminate competition for notoriety, and you will better understand both the design of this address, and the practical lessons which I wish you to draw from it. One is seized with the uncontrolable fancy to hear herself always called, "a droll creature," and falling into the common error of those weak heads, who mistake low buffoonery for real humour, she supplies the place of really humourous remark and conversation, by the most extravagant contortions of countenance, and ridiculous grimaces. The height of her ambition is, to raise

a laugh, and provided she succeeds, it forms no part of her calculation, whether the laughers are as brainless as herself, or persons, in pleasing whom, there would be some real merit. The mirth which she excites, is produced by her folly,—not her wit; and she sacrifices all chances of being admired for really estimable qualities, among the wise and the amiable part of society; merely for the sake of being laughed at, by the thoughtless and silly, for no higher distinction, than such muscular flexibility of features, as distinguish monkeys from men.

Another is infected with an ever restless desire to appear—all life, spirits, and animation. In this vain attempt, which often proves, not less troublesome to herself, than annoying to others, she talks incessantly,—even when eating; always runs, when she should walk;—screams and romps, where she possibly can; and throws every thing into confusion, wherever she goes. Ever eager and heedless in pursuit of her object,

she foolishly mistakes *gaiety of manner* for *gaiety of heart;*—noise, and clamour, and ceaseless prating, for vivacity and sprightliness of imagination; and such actions as would be allowable only in a gymnasium or play ground of boys, for that kind of deportment by which alone, young ladies should desire to be distinguished.

A third poor, silly mortal, vainly imagines that she is ascending rapidly to a most enviable elevation, and gaining at once the admiration of her own sex, and the love of ours, by daring to throw aside all, except the dress, of what the reflecting part of society have, for ages, determined, shall constitute the essential characteristics of true female loveliness. The farther she departs from these, the nearer she seems to think herself approaching the darling object of her ambition. With a figure, perhaps, really feminine and attractive, all her words, looks, and actions, are as much like those of a boisterous, headlong, reckless, ungovernable

boy, as she can possibly make them;—every effort is out of character, and consequently against nature; and *must end*, as all such conduct inevitably will, in much moral degradation,—if not hopeless misery. *Distinguished*, she certainly will be; but it will be such a distinction as no human being having the least sense of female delicacy, propriety, and gracefulness can possibly desire. If she happens to have youth, and some personal charms in her favour, she will not fail to attract, during the fleeting period of their bloom, the gaze and the smiles of many beholders; but it will be *such a gaze*, as no modest woman could, for a moment, endure to attract; and in regard to the smiles, they will be either those of bitter scorn, or of thoughtless folly. It requires to have seen such characters to believe in the possibility of their existence; for they are so opposite to all the dictates of common sense; so far removed from every established standard of female perfection; so revolting to all the best feelings of our nature; that nothing scarcely,

short of ocular demonstration, could satisfy persons inexperienced in the ways of the world, that such wayward and deplorable anomalies were to be found in social life. Suppose the distinction thus sought, is really acquired, what is the sum total of the gain? why, to be the silliest among the silly; to be thought the most daring of all those who seek to be talked about for the desperation of their outrages against all the common forms and decorums of well regulated, polite society; and to be stigmatized by all the reflecting, virtuous part of mankind as equally to be shunned, both by their daughters, and their sons. Not that such characters will always have committed, the very last acts of vice, or crime in the scale of degradation, for the temptations and opportunities to commit them, may not have occurred; but because those who continually live *on*, or even *near* the verge of such atrocities, are in almost inevitable danger, not only of falling into the bottomless gulf themselves, but of dragging along

with them, all who approach them. If they make any intimate associates at all, they will soon be converted into such outlaws as themselves;—few in number;—destitute of every thing like true and useful friends; occupied solely, with their own, selfish, undefinable gratifications; and utterly incapable of enjoying any thing resembling real happiness, unless this can be supposed to consist in pursuing you cannot well tell what;—in living in the eternal noise and bustle of a crowd; and in effectually banishing from the mind, all serious, rational reflection. Such will be the life, the fame, and the enjoyment of one of this truly pitiable class of females, who seek distinction by departing as far as possible from the course which all the prudent and sensible part of her sex, invariably pursue. And when she dies, but a few,—very few fleeting days will suffice to banish the remembrance of her from every mind, as completely, as if she never had been in existence. Like the insignificant, worthless pebble, dropt into the ocean, which makes

but a faint, momentary undulation—scarce discernible to the keenest vision, and is then lost forever; the memory of one of these poor victims of folly and self conceit, when once *she* drops into the gulf of eternity, is utterly obliterated; and almost at the instant that she sinks from human sight, she is extinct,—eternally extinct, in human recollection.

Should any of you, my young friends, desire to be distinguished in society, I confidently trust, that you will aspire to imitate far different examples. None can well be worse; nor should I have attempted to delineate them, but that I know "such things are," however strange they may seem to you; and that it is necessary for those who undertake to furnish charts to such as have yet to make the perilous voyage of life, particularly to mark the many dangerous shoals, rocks, and quicksands, which are continually threatening destruction to all who venture to ap-

proach them any nearer, than necessity requires.

How different from any of the foregoing sketches, is the character;—how widely different the fate; and how immeasurably superior the enjoyments of one of those admirable women, who place their whole worldly happiness in contributing to that of others, and who seek by a life of continual usefulness, faithfully to discharge all the various active duties which christianity enjoins. In the delightful scenes of innocent gaiety and mirth, she is the vernal sun which irradiates all with gladness and joy;—within the domestic circle, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, relations of every grade and degree of affinity, acquaintances and friends, rank her, with one accord, as its most precious ornament. But if there is any one situation in which she shines more than in any other, it is where the ruthless power of misfortune hath visited the poor and desolate with its heaviest afflictions;—where pover-

ty, disease, and death have struck their deepest wounds; and where no medicine proves so sovereign a balm to the broken heart, as the consolations of the blessed gospel, fervently uttered through the lips of heaven-inspired woman. *This* is a kind of distinction, which it is richly worth the whole labour of the longest life, to gain; for it is that kind alone, which our Divine Saviour himself enjoined upon us, as the only one worthy the efforts of a rational and immortal soul;—the only one which can possibly fit us for the enjoyment of everlasting bliss in the world to come. Distinction thus gained, not only accompanies us through all the transient scenes of the present life; goes whereever we go; and abides wherever we dwell; but will remain behind us "as long as memory holds her seat in this distracted globe;" and may be diffused over every civilized region of the earth. May the God of all goodness grant, that all of you, my young friends, may seek "this better part," unwearyedly, and successfully;—not that "it may

be seen and talked of by men," but that "the will of our father may be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

There is a different kind of distinction which many of you appear desirous of gaining, and it is certainly an allowable object of pursuit, when not permitted to engross our feelings to the exclusion of the paramount requirements of christian duty; for when it does gain such ascendency, it becomes culpable ambition, not the pure love of knowledge. I mean the distinction acquired by literary attainments, and what are generally called accomplishments. Having once settled in your own minds, that such is your wish, the next thing, one would think, would be, to obtain either by your own reflection, or information from others, a knowledge of the best means for accomplishing your purpose. Having gained this, the immediate adoption of these means would seem to follow, as a necessary,—indeed, I might almost say, absolutely

certain result; unless such adoption should be thought to create more trouble, than the distinction would be worth. But what is the fact?—why that many of you, who will admit without hesitation, that the methods pointed out to you, *are in reality the best;* that this distinction would give you much more pleasure, than the labour of gaining it, could excite pain; and that it cannot possibly be acquired without practising these methods; still, continually act, as if you really believed that both accomplishments and learning would come to you of themselves, without scarcely any thing like an adequate effort to obtain them. Whence this strange,—this most irrational inconsistency; this war of inexcusable indolence against your own better judgments? There is not one of you, who would not instantly be struck with the folly of a person, confidently expecting to enjoy all the pleasures and benefits of eating, without ever opening her mouth, or using her teeth; and yet in what respect ought *she* to be deemed less

foolish, who calculates on receiving all the credit and applause justly due to diligent study, and the consequent acquisition of useful knowledge, although she makes not the least exertion to pursue the one, or gain the other? In an excellent periodical work called "The World," mention is made of a country called "Lubberland," the inhabitants of which might be seen, laying on their backs, with their mouths wide open, expecting it to rain fat pigs, ready roasted, for their special use. Who that looks into any of the schools of our country, and beholds many of those who profess to go to them for improvement, but must be forcibly reminded of Lubberland, and its people. Very few,—perhaps none of my present auditors, will be willing to believe that the supposed case of the young lady, who would have all the enjoyments of eating, without its labour, has any resemblance to their own. That I may enable them to determine, whether it has, or has not, I will endeavour to detail the substance of what, I know, frequently

happens, and leave the application to yourselves,—with this single request, that each individual will first examine herself, before she thinks of any of her comrades, to ascertain whose shoe pinches most. For if she finds her own very annoying, she should change it, instead of endeavouring to alleviate the pain by trying to discover how many more are in the same situation. This last attempt would be, to make bad, worse, by encouraging a disposition to rejoice in the faults and misfortunes of our companions, by way of deadening the compunction naturally produced in well disposed minds, at the discovery of their own defects. But let me proceed to the promised detail. I will commence by supposing a pupil called to take her lesson in music, premising that she really believes her teacher qualified to instruct her, and of course, that the method *he* recommends, would enable her sooner to gain all the skill which she is capable of acquiring, than if she was left entirely to her own guidance. He points out a piece,

and directs her to begin. If she happens to be in a peculiarly complacent humour, a few notes will be struck, before any objection is uttered; but often, the first glance, fortified by the idea, that *it is a lesson to be learned*, suffices to produce some such exclamation as, "La! it's so hard and so ugly, I can't learn it." Her teacher replies, you are mistaken Miss, only try, and you will find I am right;—'tis a little harder than your last, as it should be, to bring you on by degrees, but with certainty. This confirms the rising spirit of opposition, and he is answered in a much less dulcet tone, and with a stormy countenance;—"indeed, indeed, I *know*, I can't, to save my life; give me something else,—some pretty song." After consuming as much time in this most useless, and highly culpable contention, as would have sufficed to learn the lesson, the teacher, at last, gives up his better judgment to this inexcusable petulance; the point is yielded, and the piece of her own choice spread before her. This is hardly begun,

ere it excites the same disgust. The same scene of good natured importunity on the one hand; and obstinate resistance on the other, is acted over again, until the time for the lesson, which might have been profitably employed,—elapses, and the sole gain is deep mortification on the part of the teacher, and angry feelings and insubordination, aggravated by success, on the part of the pupil. If sent to practice in the absence of the teacher, the lesson which he left to be learned, if touched at all, is thrown aside, instantly that the first difficulty occurs; numberless loose sheets,—all tattered and torn, from being thrown about and trodden under foot, are then hurried over to find something to suit the inexplicable freaks of her capricious fancy; a few notes of two or three of them will be negligently touched, with one hand; but soon the motley collection is dashed down, as if it had burnt her fingers, and she falls most vehemently upon something, to be thumped and blundered over from memory, for the ten thousandth time, in a

style of discordance and dissonance, enough almost, to rouse the very dead from their graves. This terminates the hour allotted for practising, but which is very often shortened to ten minutes,—the remaining fifty being consumed in utter idleness. And yet this identical pupil, if asked at another time, whether she is not desirous to become a fine performer on the piano, will most probably reply ;—" certainly, I am very desirous, and I know my friends are very desirous too."

Let us next follow one of these would and won't-be-taught young ladies where lessons of some other kind are to be given, that they may be learned ; perhaps we shall find her acting more consistently and rationally. She herself will say, if you ask her at any leisure time, that she wishes to possess the knowledge contained in her books ; and believes that it is to be gained, only by diligent study. But how does her practice conform to her theory and avowed desires? Why, these books are rarely, if ever open-

ed, except when her teachers are with her;—as if their bodily presence was the one thing needful, not only to enable her to read them, but to impress on her mind, all they contained. If opened and perused at all,—while her eyes are on the letters, her thoughts and imagination are wandering probably into confectioners and milliners shops, into stores of trinkets and finery, into dancing assemblies, or some other of those public pageantries gotten up for the display of personal attractions; in a word, her mind is employed in any and every thing, but its proper business. The inevitable consequence is, that when called to recite, she must either be obstinately silent; or reply to all questions by saying "I don't know;" or she must blunder on from beginning to end. What is the result; why, instead of sorrow for such a disgraceful performance, and a firm determination to take more pains the next time; she attaches not the slightest blame to herself, but rises in a high pet with her teachers, for not having found out, it would seem, some

way of imparting knowledge to her, as it were through the pores of her skin, while she remained perfectly passive, without using the slightest effort on her part to obtain it. Yet *this young lady too*, will tell you, if asked at another time, that "she is anxious,—aye, very anxious to be well informed." Blind as a bat to her own faults, she never can be made sensible of having done wrong; but imputes blame to every body except herself, and is outrageously angry with others for seeing her defects, when she should be to the last degree ashamed of herself for making no exertion to reform them. This spirit of unalloyed selfishness;—this lamentable destitution of correct principles of conduct;—this utter incapacity of pursuing, even the course which her own judgment pronounces to be right, during the few fleeting moments that it has time to act, if constantly indulged through the various occupations of her pupilage, must inevitably terminate,—not in ignorance only, of all that she was sent to school to learn, but in

utter worthlessness. I will not permit myself to believe that this picture in all its features, can resemble any of my present audience; it is too odious to be contemplated as a likeness of any one present; but rely on it, my young friends, that several of you, not unfrequently give way to humours and practices, which, unless you will use constant and powerful efforts to correct them, will make you what you must now hate even to contemplate, as the portrait of any living being.

One more sketch of character, and I have done with them, for the present. We sometimes see young ladies ambitious of distinction for highly polished manners; and who appear to anticipate all the eclat and admiration which such manners never fail to acquire. Should we not naturally imagine, that they would continually practice, that kind of deportment which all the most accomplished portion of society, have unanimously agreed, shall alone entitle any person to that reputa-

tion? Such certainly, would be the conclusion of common sense and reason, unassisted by actual experience in all the wayward, perverse, and strangely inconsistent actions of those who have no self-control,—no abiding sense of that continual propriety of conduct, which always distinguishes the true lady, from one who never attempts to act the part, but when she has many eyes to witness her performance; and then, from the rarity of her rehearsals, such part will not only appear forced and unnatural, but being compelled to proceed without the aid of any similar prompters to those used in theatrical exhibitions, she is exposed continually to the ridicule and shame of a thousand mistakes and blunders. All therefore, who really desire the distinction of highly polished manners, *must* display them, in every situation where it is possible, or they may be absolutely certain, that such manners will never be gratuitously imputed to them. Still less will they ever be ascribed to them, if their general conduct is at war with the

general rules and precepts of good breeding. This point is so perfectly clear, that it seems to me hardly possible,—even for the violaters themselves of those precepts and rules, to be insensible of the hazards they run of forfeiting all title to the characters which they would be thought desirous of gaining. Much the greater part of the life of females—especially when at school, being spent in private society, and retirement from the public gaze;—if they consider themselves at full liberty, in all such situations, to act as they please, regardless of any body's ease, accommodation, or comfort, but their own;—giving way to every whim, caprice, or ill humour; and indulging, with little or no restraint, all their selfish passions;—how will it be possible for them to do otherwise, on the comparatively few occasions, when they go into the company of strangers, or are introduced into crowded assemblies. We might as reasonably expect to behold the fish of the sea, all grazing in our fields; or the quadrupeds

of the forests domesticating themselves in the depths of the ocean, as to see human beings so immediately changing long indulged habits for others quite opposite in their nature.

These will probably be very unpleasant assurances to those who believe, that no matter how often and how long they do wrong, they have only *to will* to do right, and the doing of it will follow, as a matter of course. If there is any peculiar aptitude in women, more than in men, to take up fine manners in after life, when their whole youth has been spent in utter disregard of them, I know it not. But this I certainly know, that in half a century I have not met with a single instance of the kind in my own sex. On the contrary, every one whom I have seen making the attempt, has rendered himself a conspicuous object, either of pity or ridicule, by the awkwardness, and overstrained nature of his mimickry,—for it could be called nothing else.

If females could succeed any better than men in such sudden transformations, I certainly should have no objection; but much as I confide in their powers of rendering themselves agreeable and amiable, there is nothing in all my experience to warrant the belief. I can have no faith in the possibility, that either boys or girls, in a very few days after leaving school, can commence acting like gentlemen and ladies of accomplished manners, unless they have endeavoured thus to act during the greater part of their previous life. If, in their pupilage they have been habitually idle, perverse, headstrong, and disobedient to their teachers;—disputatious and quarrelsome with their companions;—scolding and abusive to servants;—unpolite and rude at their meals;—boisterous, romping, and hoiden-like in their general behaviour;—and living only to indulge their own wayward passions;—no material change can rationally be hoped or expected, after that pupilage expires;—unless by an almost miraculous interposition

of divine grace. But it surely would be little short of madness to count on any such interference in those or similar cases. Some poets indeed, have ascribed to the marvellous agency of love, the power of working such miracles; and not a few silly fictions may be cited by those who are deeply read in poetic lore, containing many notable cases in point. But it by no means follows, that it would be a very safe reliance for young ladies to calculate on forming their manners by falling in love, and to neglect them entirely, while waiting for this desirable event. There are at least two very serious objections to this course;—the first is, that the love might never come at all, although this is admitted to be somewhat improbable: but the second is, that supposing *it really did come*, the fine manners might refuse to follow; and then would probably ensue the most deplorable thing of all, which would be, to love without any return. That such would be her fate, must appear almost inevitable to any one who has ever been so

unlucky as to see an awkward, mannerless woman in love; for it is certainly a very awkward, and silly spectacle;—little calculated to inspire any other sentiment, than commiseration in any body.

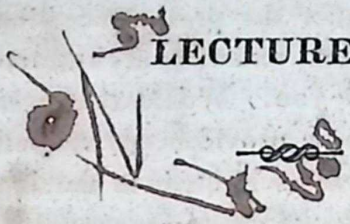
Some of you, I fear, may think that I have a particular gratification in presenting to your imaginations, the pictures of such of your own sex, as are degraded and deformed by faults and vices; but be assured, my young friends, that it is always done with a sad heart, and a wounded spirit; for there is nothing more revolting to my feelings, than to see any of your sex, who are not, at least aiming to reach that standard of female excellence, which I would most willingly persuade myself to believe, that all must be continually anxious to attain. To excite and to sustain this anxiety, is my sole motive for making such representations; for there seems to me to be no possible way so effectual to establish the exalted value of this standard, as to mark for reprobation and

avoidance, all who appear to have the fear of God or man, so little before their eyes, as to disregard it. I could easily have enumerated many more cases,—all nearly, or quite as revolting; and all going to prove the deplorable consequences which usually follow from the misapplication, or great abuse of time and talents. But I forbear, and will not apply any of them *to you*, earnestly hoping that a sufficient number have been given to answer all the salutary purposes of timely warning against perils into which some of you may fall without due care. Let me beseech you not to imagine that such warning is altogether useless, because not entirely applicable in all its bearings, to any one of you, at this time. Most of our moral dangers arise from too presumptuous a belief in our own exemption from faults or vices; and from too much confidence in our own power to resist temptation; for nothing can possibly secure any of us from these dangers, but true, christian humility, and continual prayer to the almighty source of all good-

ness and mercy for protection and support in our hours of trial. These trials often and inevitably come to all;—even to the wisest among the wise; and to the best among the most virtuous; but most frequently to those whose pride, and self-conceit render them least capable of resistance. Watch then, I most earnestly entreat each of you individually, "watch and pray," lest when they assail *you too*, in all their truly formidable power, you should fall unresisting victims to their deadly influence. Should such ever be the lot of any who now hear me, (which God, in his mercy forbid,)—deplorable indeed, forever to be deplored, would be the day, which first flashed the dreadful conviction on the minds of your parents and friends. Better,—far better, would it be for both, that neither had ever been born, than that you should live to inflict such hopeless anguish on the authors of your being;—an anguish, which, like the Vulture of Prometheus, will pray continually on their vitals while living, and leave them only, when they sink into

their graves. Can any of you, my young friends, anticipate even the possibility that such may be your destiny, and not shudder at the bare thought? And will you still continue to expose yourselves so rashly to the danger of realizing it, by postponing for one moment, the necessary precautions? These are,—never wilfully to indulge, even in foibles or faults,—much less in highly culpable, and vicious conduct;—never to neglect any opportunity of moral and intellectual improvement; but above all, to aim continually to live "without spot or blemish" in the world;—that when you are once more clasped to the bosom of your parents and friends, you may "make glad their hearts within them;"—and that, when you die, you may render back your souls to the Almighty God who gave them, as pure, and unsullied as those of the angels in his heavenly kingdom.

Lydia S Salmon



LECTURE III.

ON THE VAST SUPERIORITY OF MORAL BEAUTY TO THAT WHICH IS MERELY PERSONAL.

Once more, my young friends, I have concluded to address you on some of those deeply interesting subjects, which either *are*, or *ought to be*, among the daily objects of your most serious meditations. And although I feel no positive assurance of having found any particular encouragement, since the last time, to do so, yet my constant and earnest desire that your minds should receive none but good impressions, while under our

care; and that your hearts and understandings should here be permanently imbued with that love of wisdom and virtue for their own sake, so indispensable to your welfare, impels me not to suffer the present occasion to pass away, without renewing my customary efforts to serve you. Would that ever beneficent God whose providence is over all his works, and who delighteth in nothing more, than in the happiness of his creatures, only make my power to do this, half as strong as my inclination, every thing would be accomplished for your good, both temporal and eternal, which your own hearts can either imagine or desire. But alas! this good, it is not in mortal man to impart to others. All that *he* can do, is, by God's help, to endeavour to show them in what it consists, and to use all the means of argument and persuasion in his power, to induce them diligently to pursue the course which leads to its attainment. Man,—poor, frail, sinful man, may sow the seed, but it is the

omnipotent and ever bounteous Father of all, who alone, can give the increase.

The particular topick which I have chosen for this day's Lecture, is, the vast superiority of moral beauty, to that which is merely personal. And although the fearful odds of prejudice and passion will generally be found leagued in favour of the latter,—at least in the minds of those who most require to have the difference pointed out to them; yet are the arguments and proofs of this immense pre-eminence, so very striking to all intellects over which reason has any sway, that I have strong hopes of presenting them, with some success, to my present auditors;—notwithstanding many of their nursery infections, and possibly, some of the subsequent whisperings of their own self-love, may contend strongly against me. To enable us, properly to appreciate the value of mere personal beauty, and to determine fairly, what it is really worth, let us endeavour to ascertain in what it consists;—to what

care; and that your hearts and understandings should here be permanently imbued with that love of wisdom and virtue for their own sake, so indispensable to your welfare, impels me not to suffer the present occasion to pass away, without renewing my customary efforts to serve you. Would that ever beneficent God whose providence is over all his works, and who delighteth in nothing more, than in the happiness of his creatures, only make my power to do this, half as strong as my inclination, every thing would be accomplished for your good, both temporal and eternal, which your own hearts can either imagine or desire. But alas! this good, it is not in mortal man to impart to others. All that *he* can do, is, by God's help, to endeavour to show them in what it consists, and to use all the means of argument and persuasion in his power, to induce them diligently to pursue the course which leads to its attainment. Man,—poor, frail, sinful man, may sow the seed, but it is the

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The particular topick which I have chosen for this day's Lecture, is, the vast superiority of moral beauty, to that which is merely personal. And although the fearful odds of prejudice and passion will generally be found leagued in favour of the latter,—at least in the minds of those who most require to have the difference pointed out to them; yet are the arguments and proofs of this immense pre-eminence, so very striking to all intellects over which reason has any sway, that I have strong hopes of presenting them, with some success, to my present auditors;—notwithstanding many of their nursery infections, and possibly, some of the subsequent whisperings of their own self-love, may contend strongly against me. To enable us, properly to appreciate the value of mere personal beauty, and to determine fairly, what it is really worth, let us endeavour to ascertain in what it consists;—to what

extent it is improvable by our own efforts; and how far we have a right to calculate on its continuance. This being done, we shall not be far from the conclusion to which I wish to lead you, and which I believe you will be compelled to make for yourselves, in regard to the estimation in which you should hold such a possession.

Personal beauty may be said, in a few words, to consist in such a particular conformation of figure, and features, as excite pleasurable emotions in all who behold them. But if these feelings be accurately scrutinized, they will be perceived to arise chiefly, from some gratuitous assumption made by our imaginations, and too often found by experience to be most wofully erroneous, that this conformation indicates the possession of certain moral qualities which constitute what we call moral beauty; and which may often be found where both features and form, are at first, almost repulsive. Strip personal beauty of those imaginary attri-

butes, which certainly are the gift of our own delusive fancies, not necessarily dependent upon, or connected with the external appearance of the possessors;—for we often find it in the vilest, most degraded and profligate characters; and what has it then, more than a picture on paper or canvass,—an image of wood or stone, can exhibit?—simply the same vital principle common to insects and worms. And so utterly worthless is it, of itself, that although the proprietor may live, and move, and have a being, yet will it be an object of aversion and disgust, unless it borrows, not only *imaginary*, but *real* aids from moral beauty;—such as *cleanliness*, *good manners*, and above all, *modesty*. Without these, were the imaginary venus of the heathen world herself, to appear on earth, as a mortal woman, none but the grossest, most abandoned sensualist could even look at her, without experiencing a sentiment of utter repulsion, if not actual loathing.

To what extent this most falsely estimated possession—personal beauty, is improvable by our own efforts, is easily ascertained, by any who have lived long enough to witness the almost numberless strange, and abortive efforts to make ourselves something different from what nature has formed us in this respect. Who that has ever contemplated the multitude of human bodies continually struggling, suffering, and writhing under the various tortures of tight shoes, tight corslets, tight clothes of all sorts and fashions;—hair, at one time, literally worn off the head by the unremitted use of the crimping and frizling irons; and at another, nearly torn out by the roots, until (as a wag once remarked,) their eyes lost the power of winking, in order to elevate it all to the crown of the skull, in which direction, it seemed at one season to be determined, that dame nature should have made it grow;—then again, as if in deep humility for the former rebellion, seeking its mother earth, in countless curls of unsearchable convolution;

—who, I say, that has ever seriously contemplated these things, but must smile in bitter scorn, or be oppressed by the deepest pity, for those who have not sense enough to discover that the degree to which mere personal beauty may be improved by human means is immeasurably small. All that can be done for it by those who design to depend on such means alone, for whatever influence they may hope to exert over society, is to rely continually upon such comparatively trifling and valueless instruments as wash-balls, combs, tooth-brushes,—fabricks of flax, cotton, silk,—and the hides of quadrupeds. These, and *especially the two first*, must be their daily auxiliaries, or all aspirations after conquest; all hopes of triumph; all expectations of power and dominion from this source, must be abandoned as feverish dreams of a disordered imagination; for personal beauty without cleanliness, becomes, in fact, personal deformity. I will not deny that mere dress, may enable a pretty face and handsome person to make a powerful

impression at first; but even in this case, the moral qualities of taste must select, of neatness must prepare, and of judgment must put it on; or it is worse than useless, for it excites ridicule or pity, instead of admiration. And where these qualities happen to be exercised upon the possessor of this beauty, not by herself, but by her friends, (as they often are,) who both choose, and put on for her; no sooner does she get married, than the deception is discovered;—she is found to be a poor, silly, uninformed mass of vanity and affectation; and all her hopes are blasted forever.

Our last inquiry in regard to beauty, merely personal, is, how far any one has a right to calculate on its continuance. Here, all is fearful uncertainty, and anxious doubt, in every case where this is the sole reliance for influence, pleasure, and happiness. Numerous diseases may utterly annihilate this fragile, most precarious treasure, in a few hours;—a brief,—very brief term of years

at best, will inevitably wear it entirely out,—even in the longest liver; and what has it ever been known to purchase for those who had no other possession?—what, but the unutterable misery of seduction from the paths of virtue, or a husband, who, as soon as the novelty of wedlock had vanished, has abandoned the poor, helpless victim of his pursuit, to solitude, neglect, bodily suffering, and mental wo. Yet with all these most melancholy, heart-sickening facts before the eyes of every girl who has ever opened her's for any other purpose, than to seek admirers, how many hundreds do we often behold, whose sole study,—whose continual practice, seem to form only one unvaried course of most laborious effort to mar God's work in themselves, by bringing about some change in their faces, or persons, which nature has forbidden. And we not unfrequently find this effort violent and persevering, in exact proportion as the hope of success appears vain and senseless, in the eyes of all disinterested spectators. These strenuous,

but truly forlorn exertions, often produce the most ludicrous effects imaginable; although in every benevolent mind, they can inspire no other sentiment, but the deepest pity. Thus you will frequently see in every large public assembly, some who have been gifted with an unusual expanse of mouth, continually doing their best to diminish its natural dimensions, by certain muscular contractions and puckerings of indescribable operation, until it resembles more the aperture of a purse, than a feature of "the human face divine." Others who happen to have mouths of an opposite character, and deem them of too limited capacity, keep them ever on the broad grin, by way of baffling nature's mistake;—especially, if they have fine teeth. Some again, whose eyes are not exactly, as they think such love-compelling articles should be, may be observed, using innumerable expedients to supply the expression and the power, which the Being who made them, has denied;—and all this, doubtless, because they believe, *they* must know

better, than *he* does, what kind of eyes they ought to have. Another sett, with cold, phlegmatic constitutions, aiming to be vivacious beyond the promptings of natural feeling, will sometimes be seen frisking and skipping about, with as many convulsive spasms, as if the galvanic battery had thrown them into motion;—while many of the lighter figures, really full of life and animation, choose the opposite extreme of appearing to expire under the burden of existence, with irresistible languor and ennui; and trying any, and every expedient, rather than their own natural manner, to attract attention. A still more numerous class, whose figures do not suit the exact standard established in their own minds, either from being too short, or too tall, too broad, or too slender, will appear under every degree of inconvenience, and bearable torture, also struggling to counteract nature by every aid devisable from the fertile inventions of those most ingenious, painstaking artists whose peculiar province it is, by virtue of leather, whale bone,

webs of various kinds, strong cords, and innumerable other helps, to metamorphose the human form, into almost any thing they please. But I must close this enumeration of abortive and truly ridiculous struggles against nature; for were I to attempt the recapitulation of all the fantastic tricks and manœuvres played before "high heaven," from the affectation of being something different from what we really are, I should never have done.

From the foregoing remarks we think it must be clearly manifest, to all who will bestow the slightest reflection on the subject, that nothing can well be more irrational, than the efforts to acquire personal beauty, when nature has denied it; nor to increase it when bestowed; since so little can be done in the last case, and nothing,—nothing whatever, in the first. It will also be seen, that it consists more in gratuitous, and often fallacious, assumptions of the imagination, than in any thing real;—or, at least, that the reality di-

vested of its imaginary attributes, is not only, of very little intrinsic value, but incalculably uncertain and perishable. I beseech you therefore, my young friends, to reflect deeply and seriously on these things, and then to ask your own consciences, what a folly,—what a sin all those persons must commit, who prize personal, more than moral beauty. And this most incomparable of all human attainments, for this world's use, I shall now proceed to contrast with the former:—premising however, that all I ask for my remarks, is deliberate consideration by such of my auditors, (if I have any such,) as may conceit themselves beautiful. And this consideration I would beg may be given, before they soliloquise at their glasses, as some perhaps, may be disposed to do, after any such manner, as the following;—"Ah! let Mr. G. say what he pleases about the little value of pretty faces,—mine, I know, if it ever has a fair chance, as I am resolved it shall have, should I ever have the good luck to get rid of this wearisome business

of school, is destined to do great execution; and then!—why then, a fig for all his old musty morals put together, which are older by far, than the days of even Confucius himself."

We have already seen it demonstrated, as far as such things are susceptible of demonstration, that personal beauty derives its chief value and principal influence, from the connexion which is imagined to exist between it, and moral beauty:—indeed, we might well pronounce it utterly worthless without this association; at least in the estimation of all whose opinions are worth regarding. This fact would suffice of itself, to prove the vast superiority of the last to the first; but I trust it will be in my power to engage your attention in the contemplation of many others which are still more striking and conclusive.

Moral beauty is the great charm and powerful bond which attach us to social life, with

all its numerous comforts, and endearments. It is the admirable ligament which binds society together, in all its various relations. It is this alone, by which we judge of a man's fitness for the faithful discharge of all his duties to his fellow-men; this alone furnishes a just standard for estimating properly, how he does, and should act towards ourselves; and how we should use and enjoy, as we ought, every legitimate source of rational pleasure. It is a quality improvable to an indefinite extent, during our whole life; and which enables man to make continual approximations towards that all perfect Being who made him what he is; imbued his soul with a love of excellence; and endowed him with incalculable capacities for its attainment. In a word,—all that is benevolent, magnanimous, and good in motive; every thing disinterested, generous, and philantrhopic in action;—all that is grand, glorious, and sublime in conduct, are constituent and essential parts of moral beauty. Indeed, there is not a single amiable

quality of the heart; not a solitary praiseworthy effort of the understanding; not a thought, word, or deed, which can engage the approbation, excite the applause, or secure the love and esteem of the wise and the good among mankind, but may truly be called emanations from this grand desideratum of life, this best gift of an all bounteous God. The woman who possesses this,—no matter what her form and features may be,—provided they are not monstrous, will assuredly reign over all hearts in which the principles of virtue are implanted; and although her dominion cannot be called everlasting, it will certainly survive, in the remembrance of all who have either felt the heavenly influence of her example, or witnessed the ever memorable exertions of her virtue, long—long after her mortal remains have mouldered into dust. This is the imperishable monument erected to one's memory, which an ancient poet has pronounced more durable than brass; and which is worth infinitely more, than every other object of

sublunary pursuit put together. It is true, that it must perish with time; but it has an intrinsic value, which nothing done by mortal man, can either impair or destroy; and this must last, until the whole human race is extinct. Youth, health, and loveliness of form and features may be blasted in a moment;—the hard earnings of avarice, however great in amount, are never secure from rapid dissipation and destruction; while the splendid laurels of ambition, which it may have been the labour of a whole life to gather, are ever liable to wither and decay in the very act of putting them on. But the beauty irradiated from moral worth, is proof against all the vicissitudes of time and chance; the more it is known and contemplated, the more will it be admired and loved; the longer it is permitted to exercise its power, the greater will be the homage which all will pay to it; and the lapse of years, which weakens and consumes every thing else, connected with our mortal natures, serves no other purpose, than to give to this species of

beauty, additional influence and lustre. For should death deprive its present possessors, of all further opportunities to enlighten and bless the world by their living example, it can never be either forgotten, or lost; but will accompany us, even to the mansions of eternal rest;—there to be rewarded with unspeakable and never fading joy. To guard against the possibility of being misunderstood, let me here remark, that the moral worth of which I have spoken, is that, which may properly be called "the outward and visible sign, of an inward and spiritual grace,"—for, to none other can I allow the title of moral beauty;—since all distinctions between morals and religion, but particularly such as represent them different and unconnected, are, in my humble judgment, highly injurious to both, for the first can have no real existence without the last.

As it is all important that I should be distinctly understood on this subject, I will further remark, that I would admonish and

warn you most earnestly, against ever considering the love of praise, and the wish to secure the esteem of our fellow creatures, as indiscriminate and paramount motives of action. Esteem and praise, to be worth any thing, must be bestowed, not only by the virtuous part of society, *but for truly virtuous conduct;* and the desire to obtain them, must ever be held entirely, and far subordinate to the love of God, and the anxious endeavour to obey his will in all things. Thus limited, and restrained, to seek the good opinion of mankind, is not only permitted, but laudable; nor need we go farther for confirmation in the correctness of this doctrine, than to the following admirable passage in the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, wherein he says;—"finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, *whatsoever things are of good report;*—if there be *any virtue,* and if there be *any praise, think on these*

things." Here the whole scope and objects of morality are briefly explained; its standard unalterably fixed by one having divine authority for the law which he promulgated; and not only the permission given, but the duty enjoined, to consider the good opinion of our fellow mortals a part of our reward,—provided it be produced by such things only, as are in themselves,—that is, decreed by the all wise, and omnipotent God himself, to be—*true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.* Hence it clearly follows, that actions, to be right, *must* proceed from right motives, and none can be so, but such as have their source in the love both of God and man; for this alone can lead to that uniform, consistent, and irreproachable course of life, which looks to another and a better world for its ultimate reward. God being unchangeable both in his nature and purposes, we can never hope to please him, but by an undeviating conformity to those unalterable rules of morality which he himself has established; and by

always considering the course of action resulting from them, as the true, and only proper developement of religious principle. That which is often called morality, proceeding from any other imaginable motive, is nothing more, than vanity, self-conceit, ambition, the love of our own ease, or the love of the world, in disguise; and nothing demonstrates it more satisfactorily, than the fact, that *such morality* is so completely under the control and guidance of fashion, that it is just as liable to change, as the cut of our clothes. This we see at once, whenever any particular vices become fashionable, as all must admit they sometimes do; for all the devotees of the world addict themselves to them immediately, with the same apparent readiness and zeal that they had before manifested, in pursuing the seemingly opposite course of benevolence, wisdom, and virtue. The mad struggle for pre-eminence will be the same in either career; for celebrity and eclat being the sole objects of pursuit, that will certainly be done,—no

matter what it may be, which the tyrant, fashion, has made necessary to obtain them. The conclusion from these premises is, that morality, to be sound and pure, must have *the will of God* for its origin; *his approbation* for the constant stimulant to its practice; and *his glory* for its end. Make these sentiments the supreme law of our conduct through life, and we may very safely permit the love, respect, and esteem of the wise and virtuous part of mankind to co-operate, as subordinate inducements to rectitude.

Should you want any living examples of this quality, or rather, of that combination of qualities which constitutes moral beauty, to establish your faith in its inestimable value;—to stimulate you to imitation;—and thoroughly to convince you of its immense superiority to mere personal beauty; I beseech you to cast your inquiring eyes around the whole circle of your acquaintance; and then ask yourselves, which have you known to be most admired, loved, and

esteemed,—the beautiful living dolls whom you may have seen, figuring away in all the frivolity, and emptiness of vanity, without any basis on which to found it, but a pretty face, with a handsome person; or the women, who without pretensions to personal beauty, have been adorned with all the best qualities, both of heart and mind? Your own experience,—short as it has been, cannot fail to answer the question in favour of the latter. Do your minds dwell with pleasure and delight on the remembrance of their conversation;—what, can you imagine, could possibly produce such refined enjoyment, but the moral beauty of their sentiments? Have they been distinguished objects of affectionate regard among all who were so fortunate as to know them personally; what else, has been the means of securing this high estimation, but the moral beauty of their conduct? Have they been pointed out by your parents and friends, as admirable examples for your imitation; as beings every way worthy of the most ex-

alted praise; and as living proofs to what extent the applause, the love, and esteem of mankind may be secured, solely by moral worth; how has all this been effected,—how, I beseech you to consider, unless by the moral beauty of their whole character? In a word, among all the various, and almost innumerable means resorted to by the sanguine and miscalculating vanity of youth, to obtain admiration, there are none,—no, not one, upon which the least sure reliance can be placed, whereas the dependance upon this quality of moral beauty is sure and certain. All else, very soon fail; even where they may have been followed by some temporary success; and this failure is inevitable, because they have no better basis, than the ever variable caprices of fashion. This alone, abides by us during life, and is certainly, and at all times, susceptible of incalculable improvement to the latest hour of our existence. Our own efforts may acquire it, in the first instance, with the blessing of God upon our endeavours;—on them we must

depend for its beneficial culture; and every step we take in pursuit of it, only serves to augment both the power, and the pure,—the exalted pleasure of making the acquisition. Such, my young friends, is a perfectly just, but faint illustration of what I promised you to attempt;—and that was, a satisfactory proof of "the vast superiority of moral, to personal beauty." That your understandings and judgment must unavoidably assent to its truth, I cannot permit myself, for a moment, to doubt; but whether your *wills* shall be influenced by any thing which I have said, you alone, can certainly determine. Your future conduct must furnish the evidence, whether you prize handsome persons, and pretty faces, either in yourselves, or others, more or less, than you heretofore have done; whether the frivolities of fashion, dress, and other personal decorations, occupy as much of your time and thoughts, as ever, or have sunk in your estimation to their proper level of childish insignificance; and whether you have firmly resolved to reject all other stan-

dards by which to regulate your future lives, but that which reason, good sense, and true christian principles, all contribute to sanction. Most earnestly and anxiously do I hope, that this highly laudable resolution has already been taken. Indeed, I must do several of you the justice to say, that I am persuaded, I have seen in your conduct, so much of its heart cheering effects, for some time past, that I shall have the inexpressible pleasure, (if God should spare us all, until next August,) of then restoring many, if not all of you, to your parents and friends, with this persuasion realized, and confirmed, beyond the reach of doubt. My mind often dwells on this anticipation, until I almost believe, that nothing but the death of some of us, can produce a disappointment;—so much confidence have I, at certain times, in the power of moral and religious truth;—in your capacities and predispositions to embrace it; and on its peculiar aptitude to carry irresistible conviction into every heart and mind, not previously hardened and shut

against its heavenly influence. But these most consolatory reveries are occasionally interrupted by certain occurrences among you, which are so revolting to all my best hopes, that although they are not in themselves perhaps, of such serious import, or evil augury, as to justify to their full extent, the apprehensions which I cannot avoid feeling on their account; yet such is the bitterness of my mortification and regret at the manifestation of defects, or the commission of faults, so contrary to my wishes,—(for I would have you all, if possible, immaculate as the most perfect of your sex ever were,) that, on such occasions I am ready to exclaim;—"Great God! is it possible," that beings who are the work of thine own hands,—on whom thou hast bestowed capacities for performing every thing great and good in this life, and rendered capable of enjoying the purest, most exalted happiness both here and hereafter;—is it possible that *such* beings should continue, until death sweeps them from the face of the earth,

busily engaged in the most frivolous,—not to say despicable pursuits;—that they should be destined to bestow all their time, study and labour in seeking the things which are not only temporal, but worthless, rather than the things which are eternal; and that, even as relates to this life, they should be suffered so often, to judge falsely,—to decide unwisely,—and to act in direct opposition to their best interests;—to the only secure modes of attaining their objects; and to all their dearest hopes of happiness in their present state? Is such to be their fearful course to the final and awful hour that is to banish them forever, from all the busy, but utterly worthless scenes and occupations, for which they now seem willing to sacrifice their whole time;—to forfeit every prospect of exalted estimation among men; and even to blast their own fondest hopes and those of their parents and friends, for their future welfare. Forbid it Heaven! Oh! forbid it, most merciful Father! and should there be any such to whom I now address myself, grant,

I most humbly and earnestly implore thee, that they may speedily, by thy Holy Spirit, be turned from the errour of their ways; and may hereafter follow, only those "ways of pleasantness and paths of peace" which certainly lead to all that is truly desirable in the present life, as well as to those unspeakable and eternal joys in the life to come, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

LECTURE IV.

VALEDICTORY AT THE CLOSE OF THE SESSION 1825–6.

The time is fast approaching, my young friends, when many of you, indeed, a greater number than usual, will part with us, and each other, perhaps forever, in this life. On such occasions it is unavoidable,—at least by those who have the common sympathies of humanity about them, not to feel towards each other, especially where they have associated together for any considerable time, sentiments of more than ordinary regard, blended with melancholy fears, lest they may have "left undone, what they

ought to have done; or have done what they ought not to have done" towards the promotion of each other's comfort, accommodation, improvement, and happiness.— What may be *your* sensations I know not, but mine I can thoroughly understand and explain. To many of you I am about to address myself, most probably for the last time, on this side the grave. Under such circumstances, I trust it will not be ascribed to any affectation of extraordinary sensibility, if I assure you that I do it with feelings of more than usual melancholy and anxiety;— melancholy, at the thought, so perfectly natural to all who take the least interest in each other's concerns, of separating to meet no more in our present state of existence; and anxiety, lest all which may have been done here for your future welfare, may be frustrated by some cause or other, not now operating, nor anticipated; and lest death overtake you, with hearts still unregenerated, and sins crying aloud, but in vain, for heavenly mercy. Let me indulge the hope

therefore, that you will listen to me, at least with sentiments of kindness and attention, while I offer for your consideration, a few of the numerous topicks of valedictory admonition which press upon my mind, as likely to be conducive to your future good, provided you will lay them to heart, as the parting advice of a very sincere friend.—This I shall endeavour to make of such a nature, as will lead you to a serious, thorough self examination; and to a minute view of your whole course of conduct, since you have been members of our family. It will aid you much in this retrospect, if you will endeavour to imagine to yourselves, the situation, thoughts, and feelings of the several anxious parents and friends, who will soon be coming, once more to embrace the children of their love;—some hastening with eager hope of finding all their fondest expectations realized; while others, perhaps approach with doubt, hesitation, and fear, lest some bitter disappointment awaits them, according as their previous knowledge of

your early dispositions, habits, and characters, was calculated to inspire confidence, or to excite apprehension. Then turn your thoughts towards me, ask yourselves what answers I can justly and truly give to such questions, as the following,—should they be asked me;—has my child been docile, obedient to your rules, regulations, and admonitions, diligent in her studies, and anxious to improve herself?—Has she discovered at all times, good principles, amiable feelings, a capability of much improvement, kindness and good nature to her companions, politeness to every body, but above all, an ardent love of knowledge and virtue? Or has she proved perverse, obstinate, unteachable; utterly averse to learning and every species of mental cultivation; idle, slovenly, selfish, ill-tempered, rude, and regardless of every thing that could be thought or said of her? If the latter inquiries are to be answered in the affirmative in any case,—which God, in his mercy, forbid; deplorable indeed, will be the guilt, and deep should

be the anguish of those who by their conduct, shall compel me thus to reply. But I will hope, to the last, for better things, and short as the time is, before these inquiries may be made, it is yet fully in the power of all who may be conscious of having acted improperly in any respect, to retrieve, in a great measure the ground they have lost, by continually evincing, for the future, all those praiseworthy traits of character which it would be so much to their interest, their honour, and their happiness that they should evince. Although the reformation of bad habits, is, in general, a work of time, yet the first thing towards it, is *repentance;* and provided this be deep and sincere, which it may be, in a very few hours, all else will speedily follow, for God himself hath thus promised. In regard to these anticipations, I put myself and my own feelings, entirely out of the question, and desire you to consider me only as the faithful reporter of your conduct to your parents and friends,—reluctant indeed, most reluctant to say any

thing unfavourable, but firmly resolved to perform this duty to the very letter, should you yourselves make it necessary. It must depend therefore, entirely upon yourselves, whether these much loved connexions are to have their bosoms wrung with anguish, by a faithful detail of your culpable conduct, still perseveringly pursued; or shall have their hearts gladdened with the joyous intelligence that you are sincerely and zealously endeavouring to perfect yourselves "in every good word and work."

After we all part here, your journey home, to your other friends, will probably be short, and I most earnestly hope, prosperous. In regard to this, I feel little solicitude, because it promises to end, as we all wish,—(at least we will anticipate no other termination,) in a happy meeting with your dearest connexions. But there is *another journey*, my youthful auditors, which you are just about to commence, I mean the journey of mature life, that, under any pro-

bable circumstances, must prove perilous,—most perilous indeed, to all who take it. At the very outset, inexorable death, as sudden as the lightning's flash, may cut it short, with all your foibles, faults, and sins upon your head, unrepented of, and consequently unforgiven. But if this journey is to be protracted to old age, far, very far different must be *your destiny*, from the common lot of humanity, if it prove not one of much difficulty, probable suffering, and great moral hazard. *How*, I most earnestly beseech you to consider, before we part forever, *how* are you prepared to encounter such a pilgrimage? Have our continual warnings to make ready for this great undertaking been unavailing? Have we admonished, reproved, counselled, and persuaded, while both your understandings and your ears have been wilfully shut to all that we have said? Or, will you be able to breast the storm, (should it really come,) with the hearts and minds of christians;—with resolution to resist temptation, courage

to combat moral danger, fortitude to suffer distress and calamity; and a fixed determination, cheerfully to submit in all things, to the will of your Heavenly Father? If such have been the happy fruits of your past efforts at improvement; if you are thus armed against all the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil; against all the sufferings and afflictions incident to human life, fortunate indeed, most fortunate will you be, whatever may befall you in your present state of existence; since a mansion of rest and felicity, eternal in the heavens, will be your reward in the world to come.

But I must not forget that far other thoughts than those of futurity, generally predominate in the minds of youth,—indeed, I may say, of persons of almost every age. The aim and expectation of all young people whatever, is, to settle down at some time or other, as heads of families; after a career of worldly pleasure, more or less protracted, according to circumstances. On

these anticipations therefore, it behooves me to offer you some remarks. It is their general belief also, that the latter portion of their lives, after such settlement, will probably be of longer continuance, than the first. Upon this supposition, for which period would reason and common sense dictate, that they should be most solicitous to prepare, during the years of their pupilage? Surely, for the longest; yet the very reverse is the continual practice of almost all young persons of both sexes; and in this they are much too often encouraged by those who have the early direction of their education. These most falsely judging and culpable instructers, continually teach the poor misguided children,—particularly, if they happen to be girls,—that the admiration of mankind is the chief good, and that the arts of *dress* and *address* are the only means to secure it. The inevitable consequence is, that *these chiefly*, if not *exclusively*, will be cultivated; —that these, to be displayed, must have frequent opportunities, either sought or made,

for the purpose; and of course, that to be much in society, to participate freely and almost continually, in all its fashionable amusements, gaieties, and what are called pleasures, must be the chief business of early life. If this be done,—and how, on such principles, can it possibly be otherwise? ought it not to be manifest to every one who will reflect for a moment, that the individuals thus occupied, must necessarily contract tastes and habits, totally unsuitable to that course of life upon which they must unavoidably enter, very soon after they marry; and which by the supposition, is probably to be of much longer duration, than the first period. What follows?—why, that the remaining years of their existence, instead of gliding away in the midst of domestic enjoyments promotive of the purest happiness to the comparative few who compose the domestic circle, are continually embittered, and in numerous instances, rendered utterly miserable, by the remembrance of scenes no longer to be entered;—of luxurious, and sen-

sual idleness indulged, until it has become incurable; and of the pleasures of mixed and crowded assemblies, of show, parade, and other selfish gratifications, then to be abandoned forever. To fit themselves for acting distinguished parts on such a theatre, is the daily lesson of a girl's early life; and to be the object of such idolatrous worship as exists no where, but in the silliest of those pernicious books called novels, becomes the continual aim of her constant and ever restless ambition. Her promised reward is a husband, with a comfortable establishment; while it seems rarely to be remembered, until too late, that the only possible way to secure any comfort whatever, in such a situation, and *with such a reward*, is to cultivate tastes and habits, if not entirely opposite, at least very different from such as are unavoidably formed by all who spend a large portion of their time in general society, as it is usually thought right for all young persons to do.—How will one who has thus lived, and who has neither seen, nor thought of

any other life, than one of incessant company, gaiety, and pleasure, be able to go through all the dull, homely, and often most laborious details of housekeeping, without insufferable fatigue and disgust? How will she endure to spend the numberless unavoidable hours of domestic solitude, without insupportable ennui, and depression of heart, when she has never looked to any other source for pleasure and happiness, but the general admiration of the gay, fashionable world, whose Gods are wealth, and sensual gratifications; and whose modes of worship are unbounded adulation to the one, and slavish devotion to the other? What will such a woman do with herself should she be compelled to endure all the hardships of poverty;—to be confined frequently, by conjugal duties to the abodes of sickness and disease;—to lose all the flattering homage usually paid to youth and beauty previous to marriage;—and to descend from the altitudes of that dominion which far too many girls flatter themselves with acquiring,

to the unostentatious, and often wearisome certainties of wedded and retired life? Can it be possible for one to bring herself down without much suffering, if not actual misery, to all the sober realities of real life, whose early course of reading and reflection has kept her mind in a perpetual state of intoxication, with the illusory belief that she is formed only to be the idol of every individual of the other sex; and exists for the sole purpose of dispensing to them happiness or misery, at her sovereign will and pleasure? If, during the years of your pupilage, your hands have had little other voluntary employment, than adorning your persons; and your minds have found pleasure in no other occupation, but juvenile frivolities, rely on it, that death itself is not more sure, than the certainty that your maturer years will bring along with them a plentiful harvest of distressing cares, bitter disappointments, and lasting pain,—not of the body, but what is infinitely worse,—of the heart and soul. The only possible way to avoid all these, is

to strive unceasingly, to improve yourselves in all knowledge and virtue; and to pray continually to the God of all good gifts, that he will elevate your minds to these noblest of human pursuits;—that he will strengthen your hearts to resist every temptation which would lead you astray from them; and that he will bestow upon you such a portion of his Holy Spirit, as may enable you to accomplish these great purposes of your existence. The ever adorable God of the universe would not be what he is,—a being eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, and of indescribable goodness and mercy, if he had designed us for any inferiour pursuits;—for we are told in the sacred writings, that he made man after his own image, and endowed him with faculties and desires every way worthy of such a creation. Deep will be our guilt, and awful—most awful will be our punishment, should we do any thing to disappoint his heavenly purposes. Do you ask how these are to be fulfilled in regard to yourselves?—Simply, by always con-

sidering that "morality and religion are the great rules of life and manners,—containing authoritative directions to regulate our faith and practice. In this view, the infinite importance of them considered, it can never be an indifferent matter, whether they be received, or rejected. For both claim to be the voice of God; and whether they be so, or not, cannot be known, till their claims be impartially examined. If they indeed, come from him, we are bound to conform to them at our peril; nor is it left to our choice, whether we will submit to the obligations they impose, or not; for submit to them we must, in such a sense, as to incur the dreadful punishments denounced by both, against wilful disobedience to their injunctions."

Although the serious consideration of such subjects is always proper; yet there are times and events in every body's life, which are peculiarly calculated to present them to the mind's eye with a deeper and more

intense interest;—when the soul saddens at their contemplation; and when we naturally begin to commune with our own hearts to find if all there, be in a suitable state for the occasion. One of these events is the separation of those who have long lived together,—if not on terms of close amity,—at least of constant intercourse, and general good understanding; and in proportion to the probable continuance of this separation, will be the strength of the impression made on the minds of all but those who are in a great measure destitute both of thought and feeling. Such a severance of our social ties, almost unavoidably reminds us of that which is at last to take us all from this ever busy, toilsome scene of anxious care and suffering, to the regions of eternity; and although your predominant sentiments should not be of the same solemn character, as if you were about to quit the world forever, instead of so many late associates and companions, yet ought they so far to resemble the feelings of such a moment, as to

make you hasten to exonerate your consciences of every cause for self-reproach and remorse. Thus, "if any have a cause of quarrel against any," let not the sun go down upon your wrath; but let the delicious, the heavenly cordial of mutual forgiveness be speedily interchanged, lest you be summoned to the throne of your justly offended God, with all the diabolical and damning passions of hatred and malice, and uncharitableness, still rankling and festering in your bosoms. If any should have done an act towards another, of which they repent, but which they have heretofore been withheld by false shame, from acknowledging, let them hasten to confess their errour, and to give that indescribable peace to their own breasts, which nothing is better calculated to do than the consciousness of having offered all the atonement in their power, for past misconduct. No victory which mortal man *can* gain, is half so great, half so glorious, because none is so difficult, as that which he achieves over his own pas-

sions; and the voluntary acknowledgment of injustice, to the party injured, is, by far the noblest of all these triumphs. Should any, therefore, have the shadow of doubt or fear on their minds, that they may leave any thing undone, in regard to those with whom they are, probably in a few hours, or days at farthest, to exchange an everlasting adieu, let me entreat you, for your own sakes, to dissipate these apprehensions without the longer delay of a single hour. Let them lose not a moment, in securing that unutterable peace of mind which passeth all understanding, by preparing themselves to interchange the parting "God forever bless you," with the most cordial good will;—in the purest sincerity of heart; and in the same spirit and truth that a true follower of the blessed Saviour himself would utter it, at the final moment of separation from all whom he held most dear on earth. I speak here, of the temper and disposition which should prevail at, and previous to your approaching dispersion; for none of you, proba-

bly, are bound to each other by ties so powerful, and the eternal severing of which would be so painful,—so overwhelming, as to bear much resemblance on the expected occasion, to your parting—certainly for the last time, from your most beloved connexions. But still you are bound together by the bonds of long association;—of similar pursuits; and above all, I hope, of that christian fellowship, which excites a deep interest in each other's happiness. Such ties cannot well be dissolved without exciting strong emotions in all well regulated minds; and my valedictory suggestions have been prompted not only by the anxious wish to render this dissolution as little distressing to you as possible; but by the earnest desire to make it profitable to you for instruction, by pointing out the highly salutary uses to which it may be applied. By far the most important and momentous of all these, is, the conviction that must be forced upon every mind which discerns either truth or justness in the foregoing reasoning and

conclusions, that whether we are to live or die;—whether we are to be only for a time, or eternally separated from all we value most, the duty is equally imperative upon us, never, for a moment, to be without that preparation of heart for life, or death, the power to make which cometh down from above; and which will assuredly be given to all who ask for it, in true christian humility and sincerity.

Where is there a wretch so hardened against all dread of futurity,—so lost to all the common feelings of humanity, who, if he were sure that the agonies of death were about to terminate his mortal existence, would not most anxiously wish to make his peace with all around him? Why then, should not a similar wish actuate every one, under circumstances so far similar, that the only difference is, between the separation which *must*, and that which *may*, and probably *will* be eternal? Feeling urges, reason prompts, but above all, the word of God

himself commands us to forgive, and to seek forgiveness; and this, not only at all times, when any offences come, but *immediately* after we become sensible of their commitment. Much more then, is it our duty thus to act, if the opportunity for such action, presents itself, in all human probability, as in the present case, for the last time in our lives; for it is not reasonable to expect, that all of us can ever meet again. Let me conjure you then, by the love and affection which you bear towards your parents and other relatives; by the departed spirits of all the dear friends and connexions whom you may ever have lost; and by your best hopes of happiness both here and hereafter, not to lose a moment in making *your* peace,—if it be not already made, both with God and man. Many,—many years may yet be allowed you, for this great work, and Heaven grant that they may,—should it still be unaccomplished; but alas! you have not the shadow of security that your summons to another world will be de-

layed, even for a single day or hour. What rashness then, what folly,—nay, what insanity would mark your conduct, should any act of moral discipline, which you may perform as speedily as you please, be postponed for an instant longer, than the time necessary for its performance. *Do this,*—make a clear conscience in regard to all the past actions of your lives, and depart *when,* and to *whatever place* you may, although grief and anguish may assail you for a season, yet it cannot be long before they must be succeeded by that everduring serenity and peace of mind, which gives us a foretaste of Heaven; and which none can enjoy, but the pure and accepted children of God. That you all may be numbered among these children;—that you may long live to cheer and gladden the declining years of your dearest connexions; and finally be received into the blessed mansions of eternal rest, where weeping and sorrow will no more be heard, is the earnest prayer of one, who having so long endeavoured to

point to you the way in which you should go, can never cease to take a deep interest in your welfare; and who now, as your moral instructer, bids most of you, *perhaps all*, farewell, for the last time, during the present life.

May the choicest blessings of our all merciful, ever bounteous God, be with you all, both now, and forever.

LECTURE V.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SESSION 1826–7.

To many of you, my young auditors, we are utter strangers, as you are to us. But your parents and guardians having confided you to our care, for a considerable time to come, it becomes necessary, that as soon as practicable, you should be sufficiently acquainted with us, at least to know, what we shall endeavour to do *for* you, and what we shall expect *of* you in return. This knowledge I have deemed it best to communicate myself, both to save you time, and to guard you against the erroneous opinions you

might form, were you to rely, either upon information derived from such of your companions, as have been with us before, or upon your own observation; since neither could furnish you so well as I can, with what it is highly essential you should know; —that is, the motives and reasons of our conduct towards you.

You may perhaps, be led to suspect, that the relation in which I stand towards your teachers, will insensibly lead me to give a too partial colouring to all I may say about them; and consequently, that it will be unsafe to confide in the accuracy of my representations. But for all that I shall undertake, you may rest perfectly assured, that none can do it so well; for no other person living, is so thoroughly acquainted with their dispositions, their qualifications, and their objects. To these last, with their modes of attaining them, and *in relation to yourselves only*, my remarks will be confined; nor shall I digress farther, than to

take some incidental notice of such topicks as appear susceptible of some useful application to the chief purpose of this address. By this course you will be secured against the effects of that natural partiality which I might probably display, were I to allow myself a wider range in my endeavours to make you at once acquainted with all that may be known of your teachers, for I shall say nothing more of them, than what is unsusceptible of exaggeration. Their claims, —if they have any, to your esteem and affection, I shall leave entirely to your own discernment to make out, and to appreciate at their real intrinsic value, be that small, or great. This investigation, should you think it worth making, will be best pursued at your leisure, and by gradual steps. But the earlier we make known to you, the better, the general nature and extent of the requisitions which will be made of you; the methods that will be recommended to promote your progress; the motives and reasons for their adoption; together with all

that will be required in regard to the proper regulation of your tempers and deportment. This I now propose to do, as particularly, as the present occasion and brief opportunity will admit; and much time,—much trouble will be saved to you, if you will only listen attentively to what I shall say on the foregoing topicks.

Always presupposing that such of you as are beyond the age of childhood, have reason and judgment sufficient to distinguish right from wrong, we shall rely more upon your understandings, than your feelings, to aid us in producing the necessary conviction on your minds, of the excellence of knowledge; of the great advantages of constant application to your studies; and of the propriety of being directed and governed, during the period of your pupilage, by your instructers, rather than by your own whims, and caprices. Without this conviction, indeed, the whole course of scholastic pursuits, seems to the ever weary victims who

are bound to follow it, nothing better than toil, trouble, and pain, without any adequate object, or fair prospect of advantage. To such grovelling and insensible souls, the richest treasures of learning are spread out in vain; and all the glorious lights of science, however brilliant their lustre, or admirable their effects, continue to shine, as utterly disregarded, as the clods of earth kicked about under their feet. To them, books and their expounders appear equally worthless; and the pleasures of mere sense; the gratifications of brute appetite; and the fruition of uninterrupted idleness, are prized immeasurably higher, than all the fame, the power, and the enjoyments of the most towering and cultivated intellect. Strange and unaccountable fatuity,—most abject and deplorable degradation! That beings gifted by the all bounteous God of the universe, with rational and immortal souls, capable of continual approximations towards his own ineffable perfections, should impiously reject all the inestimable advantages

and blessings of such heavenly endowments, and be content,—nay prefer to wallow with the beasts that perish, in the foul mire of ignorance, is as incomprehensible to our reason, as it is distressing to our philanthropy. I pray that the God of all mercies may ever guard you, my young friends, against such hopeless abandonment;—that he may continually assist you with a full measure of his Holy Spirit, to save you from these base propensities of your fallen nature; and that he will cause the divine lights of truth and knowledge, always to shine into your hearts, to enlighten your understandings, and to crown your labours with ample success.

But let me proceed to the promised exposition;—first, of what will be the aim of your teachers in every thing they do in your behalf; and secondly, of the returns which they hope and trust you will make for their endeavours. I might say, in a few words, that they will try to make you "fine women," such as your parents and friends most anxious-

ly wish you to be. But these terms would be too vague to convey any idea sufficiently definite to answer my purpose; for I know no phrase scarcely, which bears a greater variety of meanings than this, according to the kind of society wherein you hear it used. Let me give you a few examples, that you may judge. "A fine woman" in one circle, is she, who sings and plays well on a variety of musical instruments;—who can cut capers equal to any opera dancer; who can stand the gaze of any number of spectators, without the slightest visible emotion; and who can talk most volubly and incessantly, with every description of company,—on all sorts of topicks, and with as little embarrassment, as a general at the head of his army. In another circle, she is the finest woman, who can best amuse her auditors with laughable tales at the expense of her absent neighbours; who can convey the keenest ridicule, and inflict the most injurious slanders in the most entertaining manner; and who can minister flat-

tery to all with whom she converses, in doses the most palateable to their vanity. A third circle, bestows this most pliable epithet on her only, who is most deeply skilled in all the mysteries of housekeeping, and can discourse most learnedly on all the various processes of cookery, of pickling, preserving, &c.; who can keep the best table at the least expense;—who can stimulate with the most delectable viands, the jaded appetite, even of worn out epicures to a renewal of their excesses; and who, in the cant phraseology of the knowing ones in such matters, "can make every edge cut," that will contribute towards raising the reputation of herself and house to the highest pinnacle of fame, for all that is meant by the comprehensive term "*good living*." The "fine woman" of a fourth circle, is she alone, whose genius is so sublimated, and taste so refined, that she can neither think, nor talk of any thing but books; who can give a quotation, either in prose or verse, upon any subject which can possibly be started;—who scorns all not

equally learned with herself; and who loses no opportunity, whether in season, or out of season, to display her wondrous acquirements. Each of these characters constitutes the "fine woman" within their particular spheres of action, little as either of them is really entitled to such distinction; and should your ambition lead you to imitate either of the four, I know not where to recommend you to competent instructers. You will not find them in this school. The title which your present teachers wish you to establish to the truly exalted praise of being "fine women,"—(for such it really is, when bestowed, as it ought to be,) should be erected on the imperishable foundation of useful knowledge, and christian virtue,—all else, in their estimation, being nothing better, comparatively speaking, than so much dross and chaff. Useful knowledge comprises every thing necessary to be known towards qualifying you to perform, in the best attainable manner, every practical duty of life, as well as to embellish and adorn it,

with all those innocent arts invented by genius and good taste, and perfected by consummate skill;—while *christian virtue* consists in that admirable combination of moral and religious qualities, which continually display themselves in holiness of living and conversation. *She*, and *she alone*, who is distinguished by such attainments, at least in as great a degree as her opportunities will permit her to acquire them; and by such a truly christian course of conduct, will ever *here* obtain the character of a fine woman;—nor will any other ever procure it elsewhere, at least among the reflecting and virtuous part of the community. To make you "fine women" of *this description*, will be our constant endeavour, and highest ambition; nor will any of you entirely fail to establish some claim to this exaltation, but by your own fault. Only make your own efforts go hand in hand with ours;—do nothing to counteract these last, by obstinacy, perverseness, disobedience, and idleness; but co-operate zealously with us, for your *own*

benefit, and we ask nothing more to insure you great success in the prosecution of your objects. It is true, that all cannot expect the same degree of improvement; but every one may acquire enough, by due diligence, to animate her hopes, and invigorate her exertions in pursuit of excellence, to the end of time. Let it ever be kept in mind, that the eager and constant desire, accompanied by the effort to accumulate knowledge, must succeed in a great degree; and has this great advantage over the most active passion for accumulating money, that each real acquisition of the first kind, is sure to pay us much more than compound interest, in the degree to which it certainly augments our power to increase our stock; whereas no pecuniary gain, however great, brings along with it the least security, that the next exertion to add to it, may not occasion the loss of the whole, both principal and interest.

Let me next attempt to inform you what returns we expect on your part, for all that

your teachers will endeavour to do on theirs, to accomplish the design of your parents in placing you under their care. In general terms, I might content myself with saying, that they will expect you to consult your own honour,—your own interest,—and your own happiness both temporal and eternal, in all you do; and indeed, would you do this in spirit and in truth,—that is, as the Scriptures enjoin you to consult them, no farther instruction need be given you, in regard either to this world, or the next. But to persons having as little experience, as you have, and subject, at the same time, to so many temptations to go wrong, many specifications and directions are necessary to guard you from errour, and to point out to you the course you ought to pursue. First, and above all, your teachers expect *obedience* to the authority transferred to them by your parents and guardians; and faith in their judgment to choose for you the proper objects and course of study, as well as to direct the mode in which they are to be prosecuted. Both rea-

son and the necessity of the case require this; unless you can conscientiously believe that you know all these things better, than they do. *If you do*, you should not come here to learn, for nothing can be taught to you. But, *if you do not*, which I may venture without presumption, to assert is the fact, then must it be perfectly manifest, that you will find it far better to submit to their guidance, and control, than to undertake to choose and decide for yourselves. You *might possibly*, take the true road, but there would be many chances against it, since there is only one right way to the temple of wisdom and virtue, but numerous wrong ones to distract your attention, and tempt you astray, until you are utterly lost. Another objection equally strong against disobedience, is, that such indulgence of self-will would effectually defeat the object of your parents and guardians in sending you to school, which is, that you should be directed and governed by the will of *others*,

not by your own, in all matters relative to your scholastic pursuits.

The next thing expected of you, is diligent, earnest application to all your studies; for without this, all your time and money will be thrown away. You will leave school, nearly as ignorant as you came; you will deeply mortify and distress all your friends and connexions; and you will fix upon yourselves habits of inattention and negligence, which no future effort can conquer. For there is nothing upon which you may rely with more certainty, than the fact, that idleness continually indulged in youth, becomes, as it were, constitutional, and can no more be gotten rid of in after life, than hereditary consumption. Every faculty and power is so paralized by it, as to be rendered nearly useless; and the miserable victims of this vice,—for vice it certainly is, of the most incurable and destructive nature, live wretched in themselves, and often be-

come nuisances to society. If my earnest exhortations to guard you against contracting this most pernicious habit, and to warn you of its many evil consequences, were to procure gratification, only for your teachers, there might perhaps, be some good reason for your disregarding them; as I know of no particular obligation that any of you are under to make sacrifices, merely for the pleasure and advantage of those who have the care of you, however kind and obliging such conduct might be. But when these exhortations, if effectual, are to result *chiefly*, if not *solely*, in your *own* benefit;—when you alone are to be the great gainers by it; should you neglect to profit by them, it will be difficult to say whether your course will be most irrational, or most censurable. The least evils which you can anticipate from such inexcusable neglects of duty, will be grief and bitter disappointment to all who are most dear to you, and the just ridicule and disesteem of the world,—aggravated by your own unavailing self-condem-

nation, coming upon you at a period, when the opportunities for retrieving your errours have been suffered to pass away forever.—Determine then, in due season, determine, I conjure you, to make the best possible use of all the time allowed you for improvement at school, and take my word for it, you will have ample cause to rejoice in your diligence, to the latest hour of your lives. It is true that you must take this assurance, in some measure, upon trust, since no proof of any gain, or advantage which is to accrue to you hereafter, by your present conduct, can be so strong, as to amount to positive demonstration. But the concurring and unanimous testimony of all who have gone before you, through every situation and condition of life, in favour of industry, and in unqualified condemnation of idleness, ought surely to suffice for producing in all your minds, an earnest determination not to neglect my advice. It is utterly impossible that such a multitude of witnesses can have been mistaken in regard to a fact so easy to

decide, as the difference between the numerous advantages and blessings resulting invariably, from the one habit, and the still more numerous ills and miseries produced by the other. The daily experience of every one forces upon the attention innumerable instances displaying this difference, in characters too plain and intelligible to be misunderstood, or entirely disregarded, even by the most heedless.

In relation to your tempers and deportment, the expectations of your teachers are accompanied by many anxious fears proportioned to the great importance and necessity of regulating them, as they ought to be.—If I could possibly make you aware, how much both of your temporal and eternal happiness depends upon this regulation; how every act of your lives takes its colouring and character from one, or both of these circumstances, no farther effort would be necessary to render your deportment unexceptionable, and your tempers perfectly

amiable. Much the greater portion of all the discomfort, the miseries, and the calamities of life result from our negligence in these respects. But for bad temper there would be no such thing in the world, as envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness. But for bad temper we should never hear of quarrels, slanders, calumnies, and injustice in all its various forms. And were it not for bad tempers, the whole human race would live in one universal state of peace, unity, and concord. If good deportment prevailed every where, the whole intercourse of society would consist of an uninterrupted interchange of kind offices, tender charities, and mutual benefits; each individual's happiness would be sought and found, chiefly in promoting the happiness of others; and the long, dreadful, most appalling catalogue of human evils would be reduced, simply to such sins as the best of us are liable to commit; and to the diseases of the body. But, even of these, the number would be greatly diminished, because very many of

them are manifestly produced, by the indulgence of vitiated tempers, and the consequently vicious conduct proceeding from them. Should you doubt this, only endeavour to trace to their real source, whatever sufferings—either bodily or mental, may have befallen yourselves or your friends, and you will soon be convinced, that much the greater part have been occasioned by something in your actions, or in the dispositions which have produced them,—so powerful and extensive is the influence of temper and deportment in all human affairs. Do you want any illustration of this truth, take the transactions of any single day of your lives; examine them thoroughly, by endeavouring to ascertain the motives from which they have sprung, and the manner in which they have been performed, and the conviction will instantly flash on your minds, that these transactions have given you pleasure or pain, exactly in proportion, as they have proceeded from the good or bad state of your tem-

pers, and have taken place while your deportment has been particularly praiseworthy, or censurable. Do you find yourselves sick in body, a strict self-examination will probably satisfy you, that some improper indulgence of appetite, or other passion, has been the cause of it. Are your minds disquieted and unhappy, search well for the source of your sufferings, and in almost every case, you will plainly discover, that either your own ill tempers and conduct, or those of others have produced the evil—whatever it may be, which disturbs your peace. You will probably recollect, that you have been negligent of some important duty; violators of some useful regulation; disobedient—perhaps disrespectful to your teachers; regardless of your proper studies; and utterly wasteful of your time; or rude, unkind, quarrelsome, and vexatious to your companions; or that some of them have proved so to you. In a word, it will be found, that something has been done, either *by* you,

or *towards* you, which is contrary to good conscience, propriety, reason, or justice.

The particular habits and dispositions already recommended, are the great and essential points to which your teachers most anxiously desire your constant attention, and which I earnestly conjure you to cultivate as indispensable to your future, as well as present welfare. But there are several others, scarcely less important to the formation and perfection of character, which I must now present to your view, and urge you never to neglect, as you value your own ease, comfort, improvement, and happiness. At the head of these stands the habit of neatness, regularity, and order, in regard to every thing that belongs to you, and to all that you do. By this,—your apparel, your books, your property of every kind, would always be kept in their proper places;—no hurry, confusion, and loss of time, which is least of all excusable, would ever occur in searching for what should al-

ways be at hand; and every action of your lives would be performed with infinitely more ease, and advantage to yourselves, as well as satisfaction to all with whom you might be in any way concerned. On the other hand, the opposite habit of slovenliness, irregularity, and carelessness—to say nothing of the universal reprobation of it, often causes more trouble and mischief in a single hour, than can be repaired in whole days and weeks. Among its very disgusting and shameful consequences will be seen—torn, dirty, and defaced apparel, unclean persons, ever varying pursuits of momentary continuance, or utter idleness and "confusion worse confounded" in the arrangement—or rather in the want of it, visible about every thing belonging to you. Your clothes will generally look more like they have been in the duck pond or mud hole, than in the washing tub; your books and other things necessary in pursuing your studies, will rarely ever be in place, but more time will generally be lost in looking them up, than would suffice to

make yourselves well acquainted with the lessons which you have to learn from them, and you yourselves will consequently be so often out of your own proper way, as to be almost continually *in the way* of every other person. Can any of you, my young friends, look at this picture, and not revolt at the bare idea of ever resembling it? Yet nothing is more sure, than the danger you will incur of making it your own likeness, if you do not most carefully avoid many practices which are but too common among girls at school; many of whom seem to labour under the unaccountable infatuation of believing, that during the whole time of their pupilage, they are not under the slighest obligation to regard any of those salutary and highly useful restraints upon temper and conduct, the strict observance of which, all real ladies consider as an indispensable duty. It seems to me impossible that those young persons who have the misfortune to be under the tyranny of any such habits as I have endeavoured to expose, can have any

adequate idea of the opinion which the world entertains of them, or they surely would labour hard to conquer them. Neither can they be at all aware of a thousandth part of the inconveniences and actual injuries which they cause, both to themselves and others, or they would make far greater efforts to emancipate themselves from so debasing and disgraceful a servitude. None who are thus enthralled, have ever any time they can properly call their own; for having no regular mode of doing any thing, they never can tell at any one moment, what their own carelessness may compel them to do the next. They are effectually deprived also, of the power of being, either generous or just to any body, in the degree to which their better feelings may prompt them to be, when any occasion seems to require the exercise, either of justice or generosity; for the needless waste of their time, as well as property, impairs both the ability to pay just debts, and the power to indulge benevolent feelings. Nothing but

the frequency of this most odious habit of slovenliness, irregularity, and carelessness, prevents it from appearing in a very absurd and ridiculous, as well as highly culpable light, even to those who are guilty of it.—For only imagine, that certain parts of your persons were as easily detached from you, as your clothes, your books, and other property, and that you were equally careless, (as you certainly would be,) in taking care of them. How would it sound in your ears, upon first awaking of a morning, to hear any of your teachers calling out, loudly and hastily, to one maid to look for Miss such-a-one's hair and teeth; to a second, to hunt up her fingers; and to a third, to make diligent search after her toes, that she might be immediately put together for the day's service? Would it not be utterly impossible to restrain your laughter upon first hearing such orders issued? Yet they would be absolutely necessary every morning, or all such young Misses would often be subjected to the shame of appearing in school, with-

out either hair, teeth, fingers, or toes; or of using some perhaps, that belonged to others of her school-mates, equally lazy and heedless. They would be snatched up in the hurry of the moment, as such girls seize upon each other's bonnets, shawls and cloaks. Something quite analogous to this, frequently happens to many of those young ladies who are cursed with the power of commanding the services of as many maids as they please; and who consequently learn to give themselves no more concern, even about such things as they must necessarily use, every day of their lives, than if they had no manner of occasion for them. Thus, you will often hear one maid ordered to put on their frocks,—another, to draw on their stockings, and a third, to fix their shoes; while a fifth and a sixth—should so many happen to be present, will each be commanded, to do something else, for these most pitiable little compounds of folly, vanity, selfishness, and incurable indolence.—They soon acquire the belief, that they are

far too delicate, too genteel, and too rich to perform such vulgar offices for themselves, although in perfect health, and enjoying the free use of all their limbs; and they almost unavoidably adopt the opinion, that all this servile attendance is among the necessaries of life. The wealth to which such poor girls are born, instead of proving to them, as it might, the source of innumerable blessings, by enabling them to obtain such an education, as would teach them the true value, and use of riches, and would inspire their hearts with the unalterable determination to apply them to none but laudable purposes, serves only to foster all their bad passions,—to superinduce inveterate idleness; and to make them proud, vain, and selfish, in proportion to the fancied magnitude, and greatly exaggerated advantages of their future possessions. Knowledge has been denominated *power*, but it deserves equally well, or better, to be called *wealth*. Indeed, by this alone can it be determined how the latter may be most beneficially used,

both for ourselves, and others; and above all, it can procure for us what the wealth of the whole world is totally inadequate, of itself to purchase,—I mean respectability of character, and the esteem of mankind.... There are few, very few beings in any rank or situation of life, more deserving of pity than such girls, as have riches, without knowledge; for few are to be found whose principles are so much exposed to the danger of perversion and ruin....From their infancy they are generally surrounded by flatterers; during their years of pupilage, they are far too often indulged to excess, not only by parents and friends, but by all to whose care and instruction they are confided; and after emancipation from the irksome, but usually very brief confinement at school, they frequently conclude their giddy career of frivolity, by falling victims to some unprincipled fortunehunter, who, once possessed of their property, cares not what becomes of the unfortunate, miserable wife.

Some of you, I fear, may begin to think, that I have already enumerated more expectations on the part of your teachers, than you can easily fulfil; but I cannot conclude without mentioning one more, in which I most earnestly hope you will not disappoint them. In this hope I indulge myself the more readily, because every view I can take of this expectation presents it, as not only unalloyed with any circumstances of real difficulty, labour, or pain; but as unavoidably resulting—if fulfilled, in your own unspeakable comfort and happiness. To keep you no longer in suspense, it is neither more nor less, than that you will all continually study to live in peace, unity, and concord;—to consult each other's wants, wishes, and tastes in all you say and do;—to be always kind, friendly and assiduous to please, in your whole intercourse; and to love one another, as sisters in affection, if not in consanguinity. While you all live here together, you should consider yourselves as constituting in fact, but one family, engaged in the same pursuits;

bound together by all those ties of mutual good will, without which no association so large, as yours, can possibly go on harmoniously together; and having a common object to promote,—that is, your own general happiness, which cannot be secured, unless each will hold herself under an inviolable obligation to do all in her power for this purpose. Can there be any comparison between the peace, the comfort, the pure, elevated pleasures to be enjoyed in a society such as yours, where all will thus act, and the state in which girls at school, but too often live, where a large portion of them are continually tormenting each other by envy, jealousy, backbiting, ridicule, and illnatured gossipping, if not open contention and violent quarrelling. Surely, where there is liberty of choice, no one in her senses, could hesitate, for a moment, which she would choose. It will be no excuse for one to say, I greatly prefer the first, but others have a different inclination, and will not permit me. The truth is, that in such a situation, if only

one, will set the admirable example of always acting as a young lady should act, the superiour advantages of such conduct will be so striking,—so manifest, as very soon to inspire others with a desire to imitate a course which all must plainly see, is greatly to be preferred on every imaginable account. It is recommended no less by interest, than by the highly laudable wish for fair repute; in short every consideration and motive which can operate on the understanding, influence the heart, or decide the judgment, are united in its favour.

If you consult the moral laws of our nature to understand what *they* prescribe on the subject, you find but one uniform language, the sense and substance of which is, as clear as the light of day, and all comprehended in that most admirable summary of all moral duty,—"*to do unto others, as we wish them to do unto us.*" The reason of this is equally plain and intelligible with the precept itself; for it convinces us the mo-

ment we hear it, that there are no other means by which this wish can possibly be so well accomplished. Study the laws of your God in the inspired pages of his Holy Gospel, and you have "line upon line, and precept upon precept,"—all persuading, exhorting, and commanding you, in every form and variety of expression, to do the same thing. You find it every where enjoined upon you, to seek happiness by conferring it;—to be kindly affectioned one to another; to live peaceably with all mankind; to hurt nobody by word or deed; to comfort the afflicted, to weep with those who weep, and to rejoice with those who rejoice; to relieve the bodily and spiritual wants of your fellow-creatures, as far as you can, by imitating the example of your blessed Saviour who spent his whole life in doing good;—to forgive all injuries, and always "to love one another, for God himself is love." If you obey these commandments, you are farther assured that you shall enjoy peace and good will among men, and

everlasting life in the world to come. On the other hand, if you *disobey* them, the dreadful wrath of an angry and justly offended Deity is denounced against you in every mode of speech which can appal the imagination, or strike terror into the heart. God forbid, my young friends, God, in his tenderest mercy forbid, that any of you should ever incur the unutterable misery of this awful denunciation. "But the blessing and the curse, are both placed before you," and let eternal thanksgiving be ever rendered to our Heavenly Father, for having bestowed on us all, the inestimable privilege of deciding which to choose.